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Vol. V 1961

NOTTINGHAM MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

Edited by
LEWIS THORPE

PRINTED FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
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NOTTINGHAM MEDIAEVAL STUDIES is published annually on 1 September.

Contributions to the journal are normally made by members of the academic staff, post-graduate research workers and graduates of the University of Nottingham, but an occasional article is accepted from outside the University.

All correspondence concerning the journal should be addressed to the Editor, Nottingham Mediaeval Studies, The University, Nottingham, England. Postal orders and cheques should be crossed and made payable to "Nottingham Mediaeval Studies."

Price, 15/- per volume.

NOTTINGHAM MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

Volume V 1961

EDITORIAL

Three of the four substantial essays published in this fifth number of *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* are in effect sections of major projects which may well in good time be set together and recast in book form.

Professor E. A. Thompson's examination of the settlement of the Visigoths in Dacia, their material civilization, their religious ideas, their trade with the Romans and their social organization, is a further contribution to a sequence of studies which he has been preparing for a long time. Two of these studies have already appeared in this journal, viz. *Christianity and the Northern Barbarians* in Volume I (1957) and *The Conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism* in Volume IV (1960); and this new essay on *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila* is therefore to be looked upon as one of a series. In the course of more general work on the history of the mediaeval English parliament, Professor J. S. Roskell has been writing biographical and critical sketches of the early Speakers of the House of Commons, to some extent recasting and amending the judgments of earlier parliamentary historians and also adding new information on the subject. A number of these sketches have been read as papers to learned societies and then published in their transactions. In Volume II (1958) of *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies* I was able to print *Sir Peter de la Mare, the first Speaker for the Commons in Parliament*; and to this Professor Roskell now adds *Sir William Oldhall, Speaker in the Parliament of 1450–1.*

My own contribution on *Le Roman de Silence* is the first of a series of prolegomena that will lead to a critical edition of that so far unpublished thirteenth-century Arthurian verse-romance, which takes its source-material largely from the anonymous *L'Estoire Merlin* in the Arthurian prose-Vulgate and from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae.* In the present volume I describe the unique manuscript, MS. Mi.LM.6, now in the Muniments Room of the University of Nottingham. I then assemble what little can be deduced concerning Heldris de Cornuälle, the hitherto unknown author of the poem, and I analyse in close detail the subject-matter of the romance and the geographical and pseudo-historical background against which that subject-matter is set. To this I add a preliminary survey of the sources used, and the first paragraphs of my examination of the linguistic features. In later volumes I shall complete these opening chapters and then publish the text itself.

Dr. J. C. Holt, Senior Lecturer in History in the University, is already well-known as the author of a number of distinguished research papers dealing with various topics of English mediaeval history and of a recent book *The Northerners: a study in the reign of King John.* He is currently engaged upon a new edition of the Barnwell Chronicle for the Nelson's Mediaeval Classics series. In *King John's Disaster in the Wash* he reopens the problems concerning that catastrophe as they were discussed at the beginning of this century by Sir William St. John Hope and again a few years ago only by Gordon Fowler, and then, as he says, puts forward a reconstruction of the disaster which differs from those which they have advanced.

LEWIS THORPE

THE VISIGOTHS IN THE TIME OF ULFILA

The subjects discussed in the following pages are (i) the conditions in which the Visigoths settled in Dacia, (ii) their material civilization, (iii) their trade with the Romans, (iv) their social organization, and (v) the little that is known about their paganism.

I

According to a Goth of the sixth century, southern Scandinavia was, so to speak, a workshop where peoples were made, the womb from which nations had sprung. From here the Gothic peoples set out in three ships under the leadership of one Berig and crossed to the southern Baltic coast. As soon as they landed they called the place *Gothiscandza*, "the Gothic shore,"[1] and the name was said to be still in use in the middle of the sixth century. But one of the three ships made the voyage slowly, and so a name was given to those who sailed in her; for the name of the Gepids had originally meant the "slothful" or "tardy," and an apt name it was, according to our Goth, for the Gepids are slow-moving folk of ponderous wit, unlike the vivacious Goths.[2] If this tale means to imply that the other two ships carried the Ostrogoths and the Visigoths respectively it is misleading, for these two great branches of the Goths did not separate and become distinguished from one another until they were settled in the Black Sea region. But nonetheless the story preserves the echo of some historical facts—the original home of the Gothic peoples in Scandinavia, their migration to the lands around the mouths of the Vistula, the close kinship of the Goths with the Gepids, and their antipathy to them. The Goths were in their new homes on the Continent by the beginning of the Christian era, and the Romans knew of their presence there during the first century A.D.

Other Germanic peoples had reached the Vistula area before them. The peoples collectively known as the Vandals had been the first to come, then the Rugi and Burgundians. These the Gothic peoples fought and conquered. But under Filimer, Gadaric's son, the fifth king to reign after Berig, the Goths moved away, we are told, to the south-east to the fertile lands north of the Black Sea; and the story of their adventures on the way and of their victories after they had arrived were remembered in songs sung hundreds of years

[1] On the name see S. Feist, *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der gotischen Sprache*[3] (Leyden, 1939), 217 f., with references.

[2] Jordanes, *Get.*, iv, 25, xvii, 95, cf. 99 *vivacitas ingenii*, though *vivacitas ingenii* is not a prominent characteristic of Jordanes himself. There is a pretty etymology of the name of the Gepids in the *Etymol. Magnum*: Γήπαιδες, οἱονεὶ Γετίπαιδες, οἱ Γετῶν παῖδες. Procopius, *BV*, iii, 2, 5, says that the Gepid language was indistinguishable from Gothic.

later.[3] Early in the third century they were settled in the Pontic region, and in 238 at latest came the first Gothic attack on the Roman provinces. As the Empire disintegrated in the middle of the third century the Goths launched their vast raids into the provinces of Asia Minor and of the Balkan peninsula, raids which extended their geographical horizon until it came to include Syria in the east and Dalmatia in the west and Athens in the south.[4] The name of the Goths became known even to the Parthians, though the Parthians may not have been very clear as to what a Goth was, or at any rate where the Goths lived.[5] At length Gothic pressure on the exposed province of Dacia became so severe that, when the Emperor Aurelian (270–5) withdrew the legions from Dacia early in the seventies, Visigothic settlers began a general movement into the abandoned province.[6] The archaeological evidence, such as it is, suggests that their settlements were comparatively dense in the rich and fertile valley of the upper river Mures, from which they had easy access to the most important strategical points in the rest of Transylvania and where they could control the approaches from the Moldovan and Wallachian plains, which they also held.[7] Indeed, a map of the Germanic objects hitherto found in Transylvania suggests that the Visigothic settlements were in nearly all cases close to the great rivers of their new country.[8]

To the south and south-east of them lay the crumbling fortifications and dispirited garrisons of the Romans along the line of the Danube, which Romans now sometimes called the "Gothic Bank" of the river, the *ripa Gothica*.[9] The

[3] Jordanes, *Get.*, iv, 26 ff., xvii, 97 (Burgundians). It has been claimed that their settlements on both sides of the lower Vistula, their expulsion of the peoples living west of the Vistula delta, and their further settlements on the lower reaches of the Oder can all be traced in the archaeological record: see E. Blume, *Die germanischen Stämme und die Kulturen zwischen Oder und Passarge*, Mannus-Bibliothek, no. 8 (Würzburg, 1912), 153 ff., a book which has had perhaps an undue influence. The claims are premature, cf. C. Engel and W. La Baume, *Kulturen und Völker der Frühzeit im Preussenland* (Königsberg, 1937) 137 f. The latest discussion accessible to me is that of R. Schindler *Die Besiedlungsgeschichte der Goten und Gepiden im unteren Weichselraum* (Leipzig, 1940) esp. 97 ff. which also seems hazardous.

[4] W. Schulze *Kleine Schriften* (Göttingen 1934), 533 f.

[5] The so-called *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* seems to mean by ἔθνη Γούθθων Roman troops from the Danubian provinces: so M. Rostovtzeff, *Berytus*, viii (1943), 22, n. 13, who points out that the document provides no certain evidence that large numbers of Goths fought for Gordian in 243. The inscription gives the Parthian form of their name, *Gut* or *Gūt*, cf. H. Junker, "Der Gotenname bei Persepolis," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Litteratur*, lxxiv (1952), 296–9.

[6] On coin hoards found in Trajan's Dacia, which were buried as the Visigoths subjugated the country, see M. Macrea, "Monetele şi Părăsirea Daciei," *Anuarul Institutului de Studii Classice* (published at Sibiu), iii (1936–40), 271–305, at 283, 286, n. 2. On the question of the date of the evacuation of Dacia see C. Daicoviciu, *La Transylvanie dans l'antiquité* (Bucharest, 1945), 165–87, with bibliography.

[7] E. Beninger, "Ein westgotisches Brandgrab von Maros-Lekencze (Siebenbürgen)," *Mannus*, xxx (1938), 122–41, at 122, 127.

[8] See the map in K. Horedt, "Frühgeschichtliche Funde aus Siebenbürgen," *Deutsche Forschung im Südosten*, i (1942), 33–42, at 42.

[9] *Anon. Vales.*, 35. Further upstream was the *ripa Sarmatica*: Claudian, *Epithal. Pallad.*, 88. On the Gothic name for the Danube see Pseudo-Caesarius of Nazianzus, *Dial.*, i, 68 (Migne, *PG*, xxxviii, 936) Δούναβις, iii, 144 (*ibid.*, 1093) Δουναῦις (Müllenhoff, Δουναῦτις codd.). On the vicissitudes of the Danubian frontier in the earlier fourth century see *Hermes*, lxxxiv (1956), 372–81.

eastern limit of their territory was formed by the northward curve of the Danube and by the Black Sea coast, on which they had a small port (p. 11 below). Towards the north-east their land extended as far as the Dniester, but there is no means of saying how far north along the river their frontier ran.[10] The western and northern limits of Gothia cannot be determined exactly, but in spite of the occupation of eastern Transylvania the Visigoths fell far short of the Tisza and do not seem to have reached the present Hungarian-Rumanian border: perhaps the Bihor or the Apuseui mountains formed their western boundary.[11] In a word, the Visigoths occupied Bessarabia, Muntenia and Moldova together with eastern and central Transylvania.

When they entered Dacia they did not enter a desolate and empty land. A number of Romano-Dacians had not left the country when Aurelian withdrew the legions and the administrative personnel from the province, but still continued to live there[12]; and urban life continued in an impoverished way in the ruined or decayed Roman cities until the sixth and seventh centuries. It is true that in the period from Aurelian's evacuation until the reign of Diocletian Roman coins seem to have failed almost completely to reach Gothia (though not the non-Visigothic Banat); and the reasons for this phenomenon, which has been observed in other frontier regions besides Gothia, are obscure.[13] It was not due to intense warfare on the lower Danube during the years in question, for that would not explain the appearance of a similar phenomenon among other frontier barbarians; and in fact the Visigoths remained at peace with Rome for a considerable period after they had moved into Dacia.[14] No doubt it was due to the collapse of the Imperial coinage in these years and to some extent also to the Visigoths' unfamiliarity with the use of money, for Roman coins had rarely reached them in the decades immediately before they entered Dacia, when they were still living in southern Russia.[15] However that may be, in the early fourth century coins reached Gothia in great numbers

[10] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 3–7.

[11] For the occupation of Dacia see Eutropius, viii, 2, Orosius, i, 2, 53, Jordanes, *Get.*, xii, 74. Some interesting silver ornaments (fibulae, buckles, etc.) found in the neighbourhood of Gyula are discussed by N. Fettich, "Western Gothic Finds in the Precincts of Gyula," *Magyar Múzeum, 1945* (Budapest, 1946), 97 f. Even if these are Gothic and not simply made under Gothic and other influences, they are scarcely in themselves evidence that the borders of Gothia extended as far west as Gyula, because (i) they are thought to date from the second quarter of the fifth century, and so cannot be safely used as evidence for conditions before the arrival of the Huns in 376, and (ii) no certainly Visigothic finds, so far as I know, suggest that their settlements reached anything like so far west in the fourth century.

[12] On the whole question of the "continuity" of the Rumanians see Daicoviciu, *op. cit.*, 191 ff., with the bibliography in 191, n. 2.

[13] See e.g. E. Norden, *Alt-Germanien* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1934), 42–8, who does not, however, discuss the case of Gothia.

[14] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 5, 17.

[15] V. V. Kropotkin, "Klady rimskich Monet v vostnochnoi Evrope," *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii* (1951), 4, 243–81, at 248 f., with Tables 1–2. On the other hand, large numbers of Roman coins had reached the lower Vistula area in the early Imperial period: Engel and La Baume, *op. cit.*, 158.

and have been found very often on the sites of the old Roman settlements, both civil and military, including Porolissum, Napoca (Cluj), Potaissa (Turda), Micia, Cedonia, and the old Roman capital, Sarmizegethusa, where faint traces in the archaeological record, we are told, suggest that a humble life continued in the forum and the amphitheatre after Aurelian's evacuation.[16] There can be little doubt that a form of Roman life could still be found in all these and other places long after the Imperial administration and the legions were gone, especially in the non-Visigothic Banat and Oltenia, though by no means there alone.[17] But there is little evidence for city life among the Visigoths themselves. They lived in open villages,[18] and the accounts of Valens' campaigns in Gothia in 367–9 give no hint that they had any fortified places (though it might be argued on the other side that the Visigothic strategy on that occasion—a strategy of general withdrawal to the mountains and marshes before Valens' advancing army—would not give our authorities much reason to mention fortified places, even if the Visigoths had possessed them). If, however, we deny the existence of urban life among the fourth-century Visigoths, we cannot deny that their villages may have been sizable and thronged with buyers and sellers at market-time.

When we turn to the native rural population of Gothia we are confronted with a problem of extreme obscurity. But a cemetery has been excavated in the county of Poieneşti, 20 km. west of Vaslui in Moldova, and a little light has been thrown into the darkness. The cemetery was in use at the end of the third century and throughout the greater part of the fourth. The finds include brooches of bronze and iron, mostly of the type "with returned foot," which were made by Goths or under Gothic influence. But side by side with these were brooches of contemporary provincial Roman types. There were also glass bottles with decoration in relief, datable to the fourth century, which had been imported from the Empire. No coins were found in the burial

[16] Daicoviciu, *op. cit.*, 233.

[17] Full bibliography and discussion of the coin evidence in Macrea, *art. cit.*, 300 f. On Sarmizegethusa see J. Jung, "Zur Geschichte der Pässe Siebenbürgens," *Mittheilungen d. Instituts f. österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, iv, Ergänzungsband (1893), 1–31, at 13, n. 6, 17, n. 3, Daicoviciu, *op. cit.*, 233 ff. For a find of coins (Trajan-Diocletian) at a site near Sighişoara see K. Horedt, "Völkerwanderungszeitliche Funde aus Siebenbürgen," *Germania*, xxv (1941), 121–6, at 123, and for what may be archaeological evidence for a continuation of Roman life at Apulum (Alba Iulia) in Visigothic times see *idem*, "Funde der Völkerwanderungszeit aus Siebenbürgen," *Anuarul Institutului de Studii Classice*, iv (1941–4), 163–79, at 165.

[18] *Passio S. Sabae*, 218, 2, 4, 219, 4. (I cite this text from the edition by H. Delehaye, *Analecta Bollandiana*, xxxi (1912), 216–21.) The *polis* of *ibid.* 218, 18, is identical with the *home* mentioned there, though J. Mansion, "Les origines du Christianisme chez les Gots," *Analecta Bollandiana*, xxxiii (1914), 5–30, at 6, followed by K. Horedt, "Eine lateinische Inscrift des 4. Jahrhunderts aus Siebenbürgen," *Anuarul Institutului de Studii Classice*, iv (1941–4), 10–17, at 15, thinks that it was an old Roman town which had continued in existence since before the Visigothic invasion. We know nothing of the "oppidum Galtis, iuxta quod currit fluvius Auha," Jordanes, *Get.*, xvii, 99. For an attempt to identify it see Feist, *op. cit.*, s.v., who is inclined to think (s.v. *ahva*) that Auha is simply the Gothic *ahva* = *aqua*.

urns, but a few were discovered elsewhere in the cemetery—three bronze coins of the mid-third century and a silver one of Constantius II. At first sight it is tempting to regard this cemetery as Visigothic, more especially as the people who used it were newcomers in the late third century and had disappeared before the opening of the fifth. But in spite of the brooches "with returned foot" the excavators found little or nothing which could be considered as proving that those who used the cemetery were Germans; and I would suggest that the overwhelming predominance of cremation tells decisively against their having been Visigoths.[19] It may seem, then, that here we have a community of people who were subject to the Visigoths; and it is noteworthy not only that some of their ornaments were influenced, if not made, by Goths but also that they traded with the Roman provinces. The Visigothic occupation had not cut off this community from contact with the Empire. Beyond that we can only say that village life still continued in Wallachia in the middle of the fifth century. Indeed, in some parts of Wallachia there would seem to have been a considerable density of population, for a traveller who went there in 449 passed through several villages in the course of a single day's journey; and it can scarcely be doubted that these villages were inhabited in the main by the old Romano-Dacian population.[20]

Perhaps one or two conjectures may not be impermissible. The evacuation of Dacia beyond the Danube is paralleled by the evacuation about a dozen years earlier of the Decumates Agri beyond the upper Danube and the upper Rhine. Both the abandoned territories were occupied by Germanic peoples as soon as the Romans were gone, the Decumates Agri by the Alamanni and Dacia by the Visigoths. Conditions in the former country are slightly less obscure than conditions in the latter, and it does not seem unreasonable to argue in a general way from the one to the other.

A part of the native Roman population remained behind in the Decumates Agri after the official withdrawal, but at first—as in Gothia—Roman coins almost entirely ceased to reach the country. After the wild decades of the conquest, however, there may even have been some immigration from the left bank of the Rhine, and Roman coins began to re-appear in Constantine's reign—as in Gothia. This probably means that the submerged native population had begun to trade once more with their fellow-Romans west of the Rhine and so became intermediaries between the latter and the Alamanni. The old

[19] For details of the excavation see R. Vulpe and others, *Studii şi Cercetări de Istorie Veche*, i (1950), 41–6. The only Visigothic cremation grave hitherto found is that excavated at Lechința de Mures in Transylvania: see Beninger, *art. cit.*, 128 f. All the bodies in the cemeteries excavated at Sântana de Mures and Târgu Mures (p. 14 f. below) had been interred, whereas the majority of the Ostrogoths buried in the cemeteries found near Kiev had been cremated. Cremation disappeared so completely from among the Visigoths and the Burgundians that the law codes of those two peoples never have occasion to lay down a penalty for it or even to mention it.

[20] Priscus of Panium, frag. 8, p. 321, 1, ed. Dindorf, cf. 300, 15 ff., 301, 22, 303, 15, 320, 29. That Priscus' journey led him through Wallachia has been shown by R. Browning, "Where was Attila's Camp?," *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, lxxiii (1953), 143–5.

Roman communities in the abandoned territory became small centres of local trade and manufacture, and so, in however small a measure, they handed on something of Roman material culture to the barbarians.[21] Precisely similar phenomena have been observed in the coin-finds of Gothia, and it may well be that there, too, the surviving Roman settlements played a similar role. Once the inhabitants had established more or less amicable contact with the newcomers they began to introduce them to some of the material objects of Roman life. It may be that the revival of the use of money in Dacia at the beginning of the fourth century was due primarily to the Romano-Dacian population of the ruined cities, who then proceeded to introduce it to the Visigoths.[22] Indeed, it has been argued that some of the pottery found at Sântana de Mures (p. 15 below) shows a blending of Roman and even pre-Roman with Germanic styles; and it has accordingly been concluded that the Visigoths and Romano-Dacians were living side by side in this area in the early fourth century and were making common use of the potteries.[23] It must be admitted, however, that all this is highly speculative, and we can scarcely be said to know what the value or significance may have been of the first peaceful contacts of the invaders with the Roman survivors.

These, then, were the lands and the environment of the Visigothic people, *Gutthiuda*, as they called themselves.[24] Here they lived for exactly a century until in 376 the Huns fell upon them, and they were sent fleeing across the *ripa Gothica* into the fertile fields of Thrace. Presumably not every Visigoth left Gothia in 376, just as not every Vandal left Pannonia when the Huns attacked them there in the opening years of the fifth century.[25] But if some Visigoths remained behind, they are never heard of again, though they are thought (perhaps without very much reason) to have left a few traces in the archaeological record.[26] True, Walafrid Strabo, abbot of the monastery of

[21] Norden, *op. cit.*, 39–48.

[22] So Macrea, *art. cit.*, 299.

[23] Daicoviciu, *op. cit.*, 247 f., Kovacs in the first of the two articles cited in n. 55 below; *contra*, E. Brenner, "Der Stand der Forschung über die Kultur der Merowingerzeit," *VII Bericht der röm.-german. Kommission* (1912), 253–351, at 266.

[24] R. Loewe, "Der gotische Kalender," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, lix (1922), 245–90, at 247–9, cf. P. Kretschmer, "Austria und Neustria," *Glotta*, xxvi (1938), 207–40, at 212.

[25] Procopius, *BV*, iii, 22, 3 ff., with L. Schmidt, *Geschichte der Wandalen*,[2] (Munich, 1942), 13, C. Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique* (Paris, 1955), 39, n. 5. There appears to be confirmatory evidence: Kretschmer, *art. cit.*, 215.

[26] For two graves found respectively in the county of Roman in the centre of Moldova and at Chiojdu in the county of Buzău, both dating from the late fourth or the early fifth century, see V. Dumitrescu, "Une tombe de l'époque des migrations des peuples," *Revista Istorică Română*, iv (1934), 76–81, C. C. Giurescu, "Mormântul Germanic de la Chiojdu," *ibid.*, v–vi (1935–6), 333–47. On a sixth-century inscription from Tomi see O. Fiebiger, *Inschriftensammlung zur Geschichte d. Ostgermanen*, Neue Folge, Denkschriften d. Akad. d. Wissenschaften in Wien: phil.-hist. Klasse, Bd. 70, Abh. 3 (Vienna and Leipzig, 1939), 31, no. 49. On a brooch included in an early-seventh-century hoard said to have been found at Coşovenii, 11 km. south-east of Craiova, see J. Nestor and C. S. Nicolaescu-Plopşor, "Der völkerwanderungszeitliche Schatz Negrescu," *Germania*, xxii (1938), 33–41, esp. 41. Whether it is possible to date Germanic graves from this area so precisely and to establish that they are Gothic rather than Gepid or the like seems doubtful.

Reichenau in Austria in 842, says that it was reliably reported in his day that the divine service was still conducted in a Germanic language near Tomi and elsewhere on the Black Sea coast and that copies of the Gothic Bible still circulated there. But if the people whom he had heard of were Goths at all, they are likely to have been Ostrogoths.[27] Yet even when the Visigoths were long gone, their land continued to be called *Gothia*—Orosius calls it by that name as late as 417[28]—presumably because the shifting population and the obscurity of conditions there in the tumultuous years which followed the arrival of the Huns on the Danube did not make it easy to attach any more accurate name to the country.

II

No extant writer of antiquity gives us a systematic description of Visigothic society on the eve of the migrations. We have no Caesar and no Tacitus to help us here. Our narrative can never consist of a few broad strokes supplemented by an occasional detail. It must be made up of a number of random and isolated details which all too rarely admit of generalization.

It would seem, however, that there was or had been a significant difference between the economy of the Visigoths and that of the Ostrogoths. In the fourth century the two peoples were known respectively as the Tervingi and the Greutungi, terms which mean "forest-people" and "field-people." These names were imposed on them by the physical geography of southern Russia, where long before the Goths arrived Herodotus had spoken of the Scythians who ploughed and also of the "Wooded Land" in the lower Dnieper valley. The same distinction between field-workers and forest-dwellers also became apparent among the Slavs who were living in that same region long after the Goths had left it: they, too, had to adapt themselves and their manner of life to the different types of geographical environment in which they found themselves.[29] But what precisely was the original significance of this distinction in the case of the "woodland" Visigoths and the "field-dwelling" Ostrogoths and what, if anything, the distinction may have amounted to in the middle of the fourth century, when the Tervingi had long ago moved into Dacia, is unknown.

The Ostrogoths were unquestionably farmers who supported themselves primarily by crop-raising. It is true that they or their leading men must have mounted themselves on horseback and must have assimilated much of the

[27] Walafrid Strabo, *de eccles. rerum exord. et increm.*, vii (Migne, *PL*, cxiv, 927), cf. R. Loewe, *Die Reste der Germanen am Schwarzen Meere* (1896), 253, L. Schmidt, "Weniger bekannte Zeugnisse zur Geschichte der Germanen in orientalischen Chroniken," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Litteratur*, xlviii (1924), 109–13, at 109 f.

[28] i, 2, 53.

[29] W. Vogel, "Pflugbau Scythen und Hackbau Scythen," *Festschrift E. Hahn* (Stuttgart, 1917), 150–66, cf. H. Philipp, *Berliner Philologische Wochenschrft*, xxxix (1919), 385–7. On the names Tervingi and Greutungi see Feist, *op. cit.*, s.vv., F. Specht, "Greutungi-Graudenz?" *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, lxvi (1939), 224–6.

military technique of the steppe nomads before winning an empire which stretched from the Don to at least the Pripet Marshes and perhaps to the Baltic shores. It is no accident that the only Gothic cavalry which is known to have taken part in the battle of Adrianople is the Ostrogothic cavalry of Alatheus and Saphrax.[30] "There was a time," said Theodoric Strabo in 478, "when each Ostrogoth had two or three horses, but now they have no horses and walk through Thrace like infantrymen, just as if they were slaves."[31] But if their leaders had mounted themselves in the fourth century or earlier, the Ostrogoths as a whole had not altered the basis of their economy. They did not abandon their agriculture and try to support themselves exclusively by their flocks and herds, as they saw the nomads do, whom they had conquered. Ammianus describes them, not as nomadic pastoralists, but as living in widely scattered and prosperous villages in southern Russia; and another historian contrasts their agricultural economy with that of the pastoral Huns, who had no interest in agriculture.[32] Unhappily, nothing is known of the Ostrogoths' agricultural methods in the fourth century, but it is difficult to believe that they then had at their disposal the rich variety of agricultural and other implements made of metal which we know that they could make and use in the sixth century when they had long since established themselves inside the Roman Empire: the move into the Imperial provinces undoubtedly brought with it a substantial improvement in the barbarians' implements of production.[33] Late in the fifth century, when our sources for their history become more abundant than they were in the fourth, their economy is still predominantly one of crop-raising though they have herds of cattle, too.[34] This, indeed, was the fundamental weakness of their empire in the Ukraine. The vast areas of those endless plains could only be exploited for a considerable time by mounted nomads, like the Cimmerians and the Scythians and the Sarmatians, who had built great empires there in earlier days. But the bulk of the Ostrogoths were sedentary farmers, and when the Huns attacked them in 370 they paid the price.

Unfortunately, as we have said, it is impossible to define the difference between the economies of the Ostrogoths and the Visigoths in the middle of the fourth century—if indeed there was any substantial difference at that date. There was certainly a very marked difference between the centralized monarchy of the Ostrogoths, who held down a number of subject peoples, and the social organization of the Visigoths, which we shall study later on. But what can

[30] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 12, 17.
[31] Malchus of Philadelphia, frag. 15 (404, 26 ff., ed. Dindorf).
[32] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 1, Priscus, frag. 39.
[33] See the description of a late-sixth-century Gothic fort in northern Bulgaria by I. Welkov, 'Eine Gotenfestung bei Sadowetz (Nordbulgarien)," *Germania*, xix (1935), 149–58, with the implements (nearly all of them of iron) illustrated on 155.
[34] Priscus, *loc. cit.* (348, 8 ff.), Malchus, frag. 16 (405, 19), 18 (416, 20 ff.), Cattle: Jordanes, *Get.*, liii, 273.

be discovered of the economy of the fourth-century Visigoths? If the Ostrogoths living on the steppe were not pastoralists, it is highly unlikely that the Visigoths in Dacia were. Scattered throughout contemporary Greco-Roman books there is a number of phrases which would not have been used if in the opinion of the writers the Visigoths had not lived essentially by growing crops. The part of the Visigothic economy which caught the attention of contemporaries was their crop-raising, not their herding; for these are phrases which ancient authors would certainly not have used of the Huns or the Turks and which Tacitus does not use of the Germans of his day.[35] In many passages of fourth-century authors the Visigoths are spoken of unequivocally as ploughmen, and oddly enough there is scarcely a single reference to them as herdsmen or even as owning flocks and herds (which they certainly did own).[36] We may conclude, then, that the Visigoths were not basically pastoralists, and it may well be that herding was of less consequence to them than it had been to the Germans of whom Tacitus speaks.

If we grant that the Visigoths lived for the most part by tilling their fields, by agriculture, our narrative is nonetheless crippled by the impossibility of defining exactly what we mean by their "agriculture." In the present state of the evidence, when archaeological research in Rumania is in its infancy, we can say nothing of their agricultural implements or methods (apart from the guess that their implements were less effective and less numerous than they were to become when they had entered the Imperial provinces); and whether or not their agriculture was in any sense migratory and whether the arable was re-allocated every year, as had been the German practice in the days of Caesar and Tacitus, are questions which we cannot begin to answer.[37] A minority of Visigoths will have won a livelihood by other means than agriculture and herding. There was a village, for example, or a hamlet called Haliscus, which is described as a harbour.[38] Its site has not been

[35] *Paneg. Lat.*, ii (xii), 22, 3, *SHA., Claud.*, ix, 4, Libanius, *Or.*, xii, 84, Themistius. *Or.*, xvi, 211B, 212B, xxxiv, 22, Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 8, 4, 5, and 8, Claudian, *vi cons, Hon.*, 183 f. (cf. for Ostrogoths settled within the Empire, *In Eutrop.*, ii, 194–7), etc. In contrast to all this, only one author, Sozomen, vi, 37, 4, ascribes an interest in agriculture to the Huns. One author may make a slip of this kind, but it is impossible to believe that five would do so, some of them repeatedly.

[36] SHA., *Claud.*, ix, 6, Claudian, *In Rufin.*, ii, 126. Their methods of making war confirm that the Visigoths were not a nation of cavalrymen: see *Past and Present*, xiv (1958), 5 f.

[37] The fact that the Visigoths imported grain (p. 17 below) does not prove that there had been any "Rückgang ihrer Kultur" (O. Seeck, *Untergang der antiken Welt*, v, 86). The material culture of the Visigoths is briefly discussed by C. Patsch, "Beiträge zur Völkerkunde von Südosteuropa," *Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien: phil.-hist. Klasse*, ccviii, ii (1928), 46 f., but he does not make allowance for the fact that the distribution of wealth among them was unequal, the optimates taking a disproportionately large share. Moreover, he concludes that Bessarabia and Moldova were more advanced than the rest of Gothia, because the Huns took rich booty there in 376 (Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 8) whereas Valens took very little when he invaded Wallachia in 367. But the Huns' onslaught was entirely unforeseen, whereas the Visigoths had plenty of warning of Valens' attack (*ibid.*, xxvii, 5, 2) and were able to evacuate their families and goods to the mountains and marshes before he arrived.

[38] Delehaye, *art. cit.*, 216, 14.

identified, but it was doubtless a tiny port on the Black Sea coast a short distance north of the Danube mouths at which an occasional Roman ship would touch in. The inhabitants of Haliscus probably lived partly by trade, mainly by fishing. Other Visigoths practised the several handicrafts which were highly developed in their society. The vocabulary of Ulfila's Bible includes names for carpenters, smiths, fishermen, potters, doctors, and so on. Most of the potters used the wheel (n. 52 below), and in this there is a clear advance over the conditions of the first century A.D. Although their metal-workers appear to have enjoyed a somewhat inflated reputation in modern times,[39] yet the treasure found at Pietroassa (a village near the eastern foot of Mt. Istritza in the county of Buzău) shows that they had attained an exceedingly high degree of skill. Their custom of setting precious or semi-precious stones in their gold-work was an innovation of far-reaching influence in Germanic art at that time and for long after, and it implies not only a high technique and much imaginative power but also a considerable trade in such stones, which seem to have reached Gothia from as far afield as Syria and Persia.[40] Moreover, some pieces in the Pietroassa treasure display so curious a mixture of Germanic with Greek and Iranian styles as to show that the craftsmen had learned with extreme skill and initiative from the ancient cultures which surrounded them in Gothia. The objects found at Pietroassa were not all made in the one workshop or at the one time: the Visigothic craftsmen practised this technical skill in several parts of their country over several generations, and the frequent use at religious shrines of such works of art as those found at Pietroassa must have given steady employment to generations of craftsmen.[41]

Finally, some Goths lived not in Gothia at all but across the Danube in the Empire, where they either enlisted in the Imperial armies or lived as civilians in the Roman cities. One of them, it seems, was a certain Aurgais, who earned enough money and acquired enough Roman culture to set up a charming epitaph over his Roman wife's body when she died in the town of Capidava.[42]

[39] E. Thurlow Leeds, "Visigoth or Vandal?," *Archaeologia*, xciv (1951), 195–212.

[40] The very widely held view (still maintained by G. Vernadsky, *The Origins of Russia* (Oxford, 1959), 65, M. Mayrhofer, *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, lxxxix (1959), 289 f., etc.) that two Goths travelled as far as India in search of precious stones or for some other reason, a view based on an inscription first published by J. Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indragi, *Inscriptions from the Cave-Temples of Western India* (Bombay, 1881), 43, no. 5, 55, no. 33, and frequently republished, e.g. by Sten Konow, "Goths in Ancient India," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1912), 378–85, Fiebiger, *op. cit.*, 24, no. 32, should be disregarded in view of W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (Cambridge, 1938), 257, n. 2 (and the whole passage).

[41] A. Odobesco, *Le Trésor de Petrossa: étude sur l'orfèvrerie antique* (Paris, 1889–1900), iii, 8 ff.

[42] Fiebiger, *op. cit.*, 24, no. 33, "tunc vixi bene vixi sine nulla crimina vixi resta viator. Acrilla Trygitiani vixit convirginio ann xii et moritur ann xxxv et demisit natos iii. Aurgais posuit memoria coniugi sue. resta viator lege titolo." This seems to date from the second half of the third century: G. Florescu, "Fouilles archéologiques de Capidava," *Dacia*, v–vi (1935–6), 351–86, at 381 f., S. Gutenbrunner, "Ein germanischer Name aus Capidava," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, lxxv (1938), 115–7, *idem*, *Germania*, xxii (1938), 54 f. That Aurgais was a German is denied by I. I. Russu, "Un pretins Visigot in Capidava Dobrogeana," *Revista Istorică Română*, xvi (1946), 173–9, but I am not convinced by his suggestion that *Aurgais* is in fact *Aur(elius) Gai(u)s*.

Other inscriptions reveal East Germans serving in the armies of the Balkan provinces[43]; and yet others, dating from the late fourth or the early fifth centuries, disclose persons whose names seem to suggest that they were Goths as living in Africa, Gaul, and Italy.[44]

In addition to iron the Visigoths also possessed that other prerequisite of civilization—an alphabet. In 1858 an iron spearhead 15·5 cm. long by 3 cm. broad at its widest part was found some 20 miles from Kovel in Volhynia in the Ukraine. The word *tilarids* (or the like) was inscribed in runes from right to left in silver inlaid in the iron. The inscription has been taken to prove that the Goths were using a runic alphabet in the first half of the third century, if not earlier.[45] But the inscription is presumably Ostrogothic, and there is only one specifically Visigothic rune.[46] This is the brief and hotly debated inscription on a gold ring found among the Pietroassa treasure; and there is no reason to believe that by the middle of the fourth century more than a handful of Visigoths were literate. It would be easy to exaggerate the use which they made of writing even after Ulfila had invented his alphabet (an achievement which was remembered and admired even by Catholics writing long after he was dead).[47] But, on the other hand, the fact that runes were used very extensively among the Scandinavians in the fifth and sixth centuries suggests that in the fourth century the Goths, who influenced Scandinavia so profoundly and who were so far in advance of it, were making a much more

[43] One is named Busila: H. Vetters, *Dacia Ripensis* (Vienna, 1950), 14 f. Another is Tzita: O. Fiebiger and L. Schmidt, *Inschriftensammlung zur Geschichte der Ostgermanen*, no. 171. For an east German spearhead of the third century found near Vrattsa in northwestern Bulgaria see K. Tackenberg, "Germanische Funde in Bulgarien," *Bulletin de l'Institut archéologique bulgare*, v (1928–9), 263–72, at 268 f., Vetters, *op. cit.*, 16.

[44] Fiebiger-Schmidt, *op. cit.*, nos. 170, 173, 175–6, 280. On nos. 172 and 174 see respectively C. Hülsen, *Berliner philologische Wochenschrift*, xxxix (1919), 124, and A. Riese, *Germania*, iii (1919), 64, who point out that these inscriptions have nothing to do with the Goths.

[45] H. Arntz and H. Zeiss, *Die einheimischen Runendenkmäler des Festlandes* (Leipzig, 1939), 19–41, with bibliography, to which add W. Krause, "Der Speer von Kowel, ein wiedergefundenes Runendenkmal," *Germanien*, N.F., iii (1941), 450–64. But G. Must, "The Inscription on the Spearhead of Kovel," *Language*, xxxi (1955), 493–8, suggests that the inscription is neither Runic nor Germanic, but Illyrican.

[46] A fragment of a La Tène cup with an alphabetical ornament around the rim—the letters I, N, X, and D (or Δ) can be made out—was discovered in the excavations at Poiana in the county of Tecuci on the left bank of the Siret some 25 km. from the town of Tecuci itself: R. and E. Vulpe, "Les fouilles de Poiana," *Dacia*, iii–iv (1927–32), 253–351, at 342 f. with Figure 123. The inscription has been claimed as a Gothic runic inscription by F. Altheim, "Das erste Auftreten der Goten im Donauraum," *Germanien* (1939), 49–56, which seems wild. For other alleged "runes" which have been found in Rumania and which are none of them genuine runic inscriptions see K. Horedt, "Funde der Völkerwanderungszeit aus Siebenbürgen," *Anuarul Institutului de Studii Classice*, iv (1941–4), 163–79, at 168 ff.

[47] Apart from Philostorgius, ii, 5 (who was not a Catholic) see Socrates, iv, 33, 6, Sozomen, vi, 37, 11, Jordanes, *Get.*, li, 267, Eugenius of Toledo, *carm.*, xxxix, 6, xl, *fin.*, cf. E. Wölfflin "Joca Monachorum," *Monatsberichte d. kön. preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* (1872), 106–18, who cites (p. 118) from a seventh-century uncial MS. of Schlettstadt: "qui primus litteras Gutigas invenit? Goulphyla Gotorum episcopus."

widespread use of writing for magical or religious purposes than the solitary surviving inscription might at first sight indicate.[48]

It is difficult to resist the impression that in their material civilization the Visigoths had advanced considerably beyond the level reached by the Germans of whom Tacitus speaks. It is true that we cannot answer many of the fundamental questions which arise concerning their society. We may guess, in view of what is known about St. Sabas, that land was no longer owned by the kindreds and that some Visigoths had been dispossessed of their land altogether. Little can be deduced at present about the quantities of iron which were at their disposal. Their weapons, in so far as they were made of metal at all, were of iron, and their arrow-heads were tipped with it.[49] Although there is no evidence that the Dacian gold-mines were exploited in the fourth century,[50] it would indeed be surprising if Visigothic stocks of iron were no greater than those of the Germans in general 300 years earlier. Roman money will have been no less widely used as a means of exchange in the interior of Gothia than it had been in the interior of Tacitus' Germany. We have seen that there appear to have been islands of sub-Roman civilization in Gothia far from the frontier; and the inhabitants of these old Roman cities probably introduced the Visigoths to the use of money as a means of exchange. Moreover, Roman merchants were no less likely to bring money into southern Gothia than they had been to bring it into the frontier districts of first-century Germany. Indeed, there was one feature of Visigothic life which was wholly alien to the Germans of Tacitus' day: Romano-Gothic trade was fundamental to the very existence of Visigothic society in the form which that society had taken on by the middle of the fourth century, and if the Roman government closed the frontier to traders the effect on the Visigoths was disastrous.[51] But there are two matters which seem decisive. Unlike the Germans of Tacitus' day, the Visigoths were making almost universal use of the potter's wheel (n. 52 below), a fact which in itself suggests that they had larger centres of population than had been known in the first century. But the clearest evidence is the fact that writing began in Ulfila's time to play a decisive part in Visigothic life, being used not merely to preserve magical formulae but also to propagate ideas. This alone is sufficient to indicate a much higher degree of complexity and advancement in fourth-century Visigothic society than anything that had been known in the time of Tacitus.

III

A Visigothic graveyard of the fourth century was excavated in 1903 at Sântana de Mures (formerly Marosszentanna) on the right bank of the river

[48] For the Pietroassa rune see esp. Arntz and Zeiss, *op. cit.*, 52–97, 443, with a bibliography, to which add W. Krogmann, "Der Runenring von Pietroassa," *Wörter und Sachen*, xxi (1940–1), 26–52, H. J. Graf, *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift*, xxxi (1943), 128 f.

[49] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 7, 14.

[50] O. Davies, *Roman Mines in Europe* (Oxford, 1935), 205 f.

[51] *Journal of Roman Studies*, xlvi (1956), 66 f.

Mures some 3 km. north-east of Târgu Mures (Marosvásárhely). Most of the seventy-four graves, in so far as they had not been robbed, were well furnished with pottery and small ornaments and the like. There were on the average four or five pots to each grave, though one child's grave contained as many as twelve and some contained none at all. Some of the pots are of Roman make, some closely resemble Roman pots, others are identical with the Ostrogothic pottery of the Kievan area. Of over 100 pots scarcely a dozen had not been turned on the wheel.[52] Not a single weapon was found during the excavations, although a two-edged sword was discovered before systematic digging began. (This absence of weapons from their graves is characteristic of the Visigoths, though not of the contemporary Vandals and Burgundians, throughout their history.[53]) A number of small iron knives, some of which were found in women's and children's graves, could not be classed as weapons. The buckles, brooches and rings were mostly made of bronze, seldom of iron, sometimes of silver. There were several silver pendants. There were bone combs, needles, spindles. There were considerable quantities of cornelian and of blue and green and yellow glass beads, skilfully cut into several facets and showing in their style strong Roman influence. There were round beads of amber and of black paste with white inlay, and the like. Glass was otherwise represented by a single conical cup of Roman make.[54] Besides the pottery there were also found the bones of pigs, sheep and poultry in some of the graves. Cremation was unknown: the body was laid fully clothed in a trench, and the earth was heaped over it.[55]

These finds are relevant to our present purpose in two ways. First, one of the most striking features of the finds is that in several respects they are practically indistinguishable from the contents of some of the Ostrogothic graves of the Kievan area; and it seems that in spite of the very different circumstances in which the two peoples were living many of the material objects of Visigothic society had undergone little change as a result of their settling in

[52] Of the seven pots found at Aldeni only one appears to be handmade: G. Ştefan, "Une tombe de l'époque des migrations à Aldeni (Dép. de Buzău)," *Dacia*, vii–viii (1941), 217–21, cf. Figure 1 (no. 5). All three of the pots found at Lechinţa de Mures were wheelmade: Beninger, *art. cit.* (in n. 7 above), 123 f. Handmade pottery was not owned by the poor only: see Kovacs in the first of the articles cited in n. 55 below, tomb no. 40, which includes a handmade pot, though the tomb is obviously that of a well-to-do woman who owned several silver ornaments.

[53] The absence of Visigothic weapons in Rumanian excavations cannot be taken as proof that the Visigoths lived on peaceful terms with the Romano-Dacians whom they found in their country: *contra*, G. I. Brătianu, "Le problème de la continuité Daco-roumaine," *Revue historique du sud-est européen*, xx (1943), 46–70, at 60.

[54] For a similar conical glass beaker of the third or fourth century which is thought to have been found at Apulum see Horedt (cited in n. 46 above), 165.

[55] On these excavations see I. Kovacs, *Dolgozatok: travaux de la section numismatique et archéologique du musée national de Transylvanie à Kolozsvar*, iii (1912), 250–367, of which I have read only the very full French summary; cf. Brenner, *art. cit.* (in n. 23 above), 262–7. The excavations at Târgu Mures yielded objects very similar to those found at Sântana: see Kovacs's further article in *Dolgozatok*, vi (1915), 226–325.

Dacia.[56] In the second place, the finds show that both Ostrogothic and Visigothic art and life had been subjected to considerable influence by Roman craftsmen and traders. Roman trade with the Ostrogoths was well developed, and many a trader must have come up the Bug and the Dnieper and tramped or rode mile by mile from one Ostrogothic village to another. As for the Visigoths, not only had Roman traders access to the sub-Roman population of the countryside (p. 7 above) and towns of Gothia, but Roman pottery and glass found their way to the Visigoths themselves deep in Gothia.

On the other hand, there is a piece of evidence which suggests that Visigothic tastes had exercised some influence on the Roman inhabitants of Transdanubian Dacia before Aurelian's evacuation. In a Roman grave found in Bruiu (Braller) in the Kökel valley there was discovered a silver brooch of the third century which shows clear traces of Pontic-German influence. The tomb dates from the Roman period of the occupation of Dacia or perhaps from shortly after the official Roman withdrawal, but it is in any case the grave of a Roman.[57] Indeed, the possibility cannot be excluded that some of the "Visigothic" objects found in Gothia may in fact have been made or at any rate owned and used by the Romano-Dacian inhabitants of the country. Moreover, a number of characteristically Gothic bronze brooches—fibulae "with returned foot"—have been found in what is now Bulgaria. One has been discovered in a Germanic context near Madara, another in the neighbourhood of Shumen, a third not far from Stara Zagora. They date from the third and fourth centuries, and it is not necessary to believe that all of them were dropped by Gothic raiders. Gothic civilians and Gothic troops serving in the Imperial forces could often enough be seen south of the Danube (p. 12 f. above); and the local Roman inhabitants may have made some of these brooches on Gothic models or may have acquired them by way of trade from Gothia.[58]

Trading across the frontier brought much profit not only to the Visigoths but also to Roman merchants in the various frontier cities as well as to the ubiquitous Syrian traders who came into Gothia.[59] It is said, for example, that Maximinus, who afterwards became Emperor, retired from the army in the reign of Macrinus (217–8), bought land and settled down in the Thracian village where he had been born, and then carried on trade continuously with

[56] I know the Ostrogothic finds only from P. Reinecke, "Aus der russischen archäologischen Litteratur," *Mainzer Zeitschrift*, i (1906), 42–50, M. Ebert, "Ausgrabungen bei dem 'Gorodok Nikolajewka' am Dnjepr," *Prähistorische Zeitschrift*, v (1913), 80–100, 110–3, L. Kilian, "Gotische Irdenware aus dem Gebiet und Museum Berditschew," *Alt-Preussen*, viii (1943), 8–10.

[57] K. Horedt, "Völkerwanderungszeitliche Funde aus Siebenbürgen," *Germania*, xxv (1941), 121–6, at 121, 126, *idem*, "Frühgeschichtliche Funde aus Siebenbürgen," *Deutsche Forschung im Südosten*, i (1942), 33–42, at 35 f.

[58] Tackenberg, *art. cit.* (in n. 43 above), 264–6.

[59] Schulze, *op. cit.* (in n. 4 above), 529, n. 3. For Syrians in Transdanubian Dacia in an earlier period see *CIL*, iii, 7761, 7915. They were active on the west coast of the Black Sea in the sixth century also: V. Beshevliev, "Altchristliche Grabinschriften aus Varna," *Bulletin de la société historique bulgare*, xix–xx (1944), 18–39.

the Goths beyond the frontier.[60] Our authority is unreliable, and objections can readily be raised to some points in his story; but there seems little reason to doubt his implication that in the fourth century, when he was writing, landowners in the Balkan provinces sometimes had an interest in the Trans-danubian trade. It may be that not all the Roman merchants who came into Gothia before 376 were petty, independent pedlars each working on his own account. Some of them may have been the agents of large Roman landowners trading the products of Roman villas for the slaves and raw materials of the Goths. In the view of the Imperial government in 369, however, the Visigoths used their trading facilities to inflict damage on the provincials whose cities they were allowed to enter. Accordingly, after his victory over them in that year Valens revived the old Roman practice of restricting the activities of the Germanic traders to specific market towns. In future the trade was to be confined to two only of the Danubian cities in spite of the loss thereby inflicted on the others.[61] This was a severe blow to a people whose need for Roman imports was as pressing as that of the Visigoths; and the fact that they accepted this restriction of their trade, according to a contemporary Roman, was an indication that they had surrendered unconditionally in 369.[62]

The character of the goods traded is partly revealed by the nature of the subsidies which the Visigoths, in return for leaving the Imperial provinces in peace, had received from the Roman government with some intervals since the middle of the third century. The subsidies were very substantial, and in the opinion of one Roman they were more costly to the Empire than the raids which they were designed to prevent. They took the form of coin, grain, shiploads of clothing, and other unspecified articles.[63] This suggests that the goods imported from the Roman market towns also included grain (which was certainly exported at this time to the pastoral nomads of south-eastern Europe),[64] and cloth, to which may be added a number of luxury goods, like some of the objects excavated at Sântana de Mures—pottery, glass, combs, and doubtless other articles, such as wine, which have not survived.

Their trade with the Empire influenced the language of the Visigoths in a striking degree. Roman traders together with the hundreds of Visigoths who returned home from service with the Imperial forces planted an interesting list of Latin words in the Gothic language before the middle of the fourth century and before Ulfila took up his pen. Greek influence on Gothic was

[60] SHA., *Maxim.*, iv, 4.

[61] Themistius, *Or.*, x, 135 CD, cf. *Hermes*, lxxxiv (1956), 376 f.

[62] Themistius, *loc. cit.*, *τοῦτο δὲ ἦν ἅμα μὲν σημεῖον τοῦ πάντα ἐπιτάττοντα τοῖς βαρβάροις τὰς σπονδὰς ποιεῖσθαι.*

[63] *Ibid.*, 135B, cf. Julian, *Caes.*, 329A, Eusebius, *VC*, iv, 5. The subsidies are attested in the reign of Alexander Severus: Peter the Patrician, frag. 8, Zosimus, i, 24, 2, Zonaras, xii, 21, cf. Jordanes, *Get.*, xvi, 89.

[64] Themistius, *Or.*, xxx, 350A, which is interesting in that it illustrates the dependence of the nomads on imports from the settled agricultural populations with whom they came in contact.

almost exclusively ecclesiastical, but the Latin words which established themselves in Gothic—and well over a score are known—have an exclusively military and commercial character.[65]

What did the Visigoths export in return for their imports? We have already seen that large numbers of fourth-century coins have been found in Visigothic territory. Many of them doubtless belonged to the submerged Roman population of the country—indeed, a fourth-century hoard of coins was found at Orşova (county of Severin) along with other Roman objects in the ruins of a Roman house.[66] Doubtless, too, many of them arrived in Gothia by way of the subsidies paid over by the Roman government and the pay brought back by individual Visigothic soldiers who had enlisted in the Roman army.[67] Yet it can scarcely be questioned that a high percentage of these coins must have reached the Visigoths as a result of their trade with the Empire. That would explain why many of them lie on the trade routes which ran from the Danube northwards to the great passes over the Transsylvanian Alps.[68] Since the Visigoths, then, possessed so many Roman coins, we may conjecture that they sometimes paid for Roman imports in Roman coins: the subsidies may not have been entirely lost to the Empire.

But the chief export of the Visigoths was slaves. When the Emperor Julian was preparing in 362 for his vast campaign against the Persians, some of his advisers urged him instead to attack the Visigoths. Julian replied that he was looking for worthier foes, for the Goths were not a match for the Galatian dealers by whom they were offered for sale everywhere, high and low alike.[69] Indeed, a law passed by the Imperial government about a dozen years after Julian had spoken these words suggests that slaves were the most important commodity imported by Roman traders from the barbarian world in general.[70] Not the least enthusiastic among the slavers were the officers commanding the garrisons on the Danube, and their purchases and sales of slaves reached high proportions about the year 370.[71] They were still hoping to procure domestic slaves, agricultural workers, and herdsmen as well as concubines and fancy boys from among the Visigoths who crossed the river in 376.[72] But

[65] M. H. Jellinek, *Geschichte der gotischen Sprache* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1926), 179 ff. Schulze, *op. cit.* (in n. 4 above), 511, n. 2, E. Schwarz, *Goten, Nordgermanen, Angelsachsen* (Berne and Munich, 1951), 35 ff., etc.

[66] Macrea, *art. cit.* (in n. 6 above), 303.

[67] Eusebius, *VC*, ix, 7, Libanius, *Or.*, lix, 92, Amm. Marc., xx, 8, 1 (cf. xxiii, 2, 7), Zosimus, iii, 25, 6, and n. 43 above. The Gothic corps mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* date from Theodosius' reign: Mommsen, *Ges. Schr.*, vi, 282.

[68] Jung, *art. cit.* (in n. 17 above), 13 f., C. Schuchhardt, "Wälle und Chausseen im südlichen und östlichen Dacien," *Archäologisch-epigraphische Mittheilungen aus Oesterreich-Ungarn*, ix (1885), 202–32, at 230.

[69] Amm. Marc., xxii, 7, 8.

[70] *C Just.*, iv, 63, 2 (? 374): why otherwise are *mancipia* specified in that law?

[71] Themistius, *Or.*, x, 136B, φρουράρχας δὲ καὶ ταξιάρχας ἐμπόρους μᾶλλον καὶ τῶν ἀνδραπόδων καπήλους, οἷς τοῦτο μόνον ἔργον προσέκειτο πλεῖστα μὲν ὠνήσασθαι, πλεῖστα δὲ καὶ ἀπεμπολῆσαι.

[72] Eunapius, frag. 42 (239, 4, Dindorf), Zosimus, iv, 20, 6.

even before that date the number of such slaves scattered over Thrace alone was very high, and a writer of Julian's own time or earlier seems to suggest that there was scarcely a region of the Empire which did not possess its Gothic slaves. And these slaves were not less numerous at the end of the century, when years of warfare had delivered many a Visigoth into the hands of the Romans.[73]

That the Galatian dealers were able to organize manhunts in Visigothic territory without the permission of the Visigothic leaders is scarcely credible. They may indeed have done so occasionally, but for the most part they will have simply bought the slaves from free Visigoths; and if so, the implication would seem to be that some Visigoths would enslave members of their own people (though not perhaps members of their own tribe or of their own clan) and would sell them to the Roman merchants. That is why the many slaves from Gothia who could be found in the Thracian provinces in and before 376 were actually Visigoths: they are not said to have been Vandals or Gepids or Sarmatians whom the Visigoths had captured in their numerous border forays and had then sold to the Galatian dealers. True, many a prisoner taken in these wars must have ended his days in slavery to the Visigoths or the Romans, but the slaves to whom Julian referred were neither Sarmatians nor Gepids: they were Visigoths by birth. Although not all the Romans who were taken prisoner by the Visigoths were necessarily reduced to the condition of slaves,[74] yet some of the more well-to-do Visigoths themselves possessed slaves of their own and were able to bring them across the Danube in 376.[75] Unfortunately, there is no information about the nationality of these slaves of the Visigothic optimates, and whether they, too, were Visigoths is not clear. But doubtless it would have been difficult to keep many Visigoths enslaved in Gothia itself, and these slaves may well have been Vandals, Gepids, Sarmatians or Romans. There is no valid evidence for inter-tribal warfare among the Visigoths before 376,[76] a fact which also suggests that slaves in Gothia were not usually Visigoths. But there is no evidence to show how those who were sold to the Romans had been reduced to bondage in the first place. They may have been enslaved through failure to repay loans (though to assume the existence of debt-slavery at this date is perhaps somewhat hazardous) or they may have been sold by husbands or parents who could not otherwise save them from starvation.

The evidence of archaeology, of the Gothic language, and of the literary authorities all combine to show that trade between Gothia and the Roman provinces was very highly developed; and when the archaeology of Rumania

[73] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 6, 5, "ex eadem gente multitudo, dudum a mercatoribus venundati," SHA., *Claud.*, ix, 5, "nec ulla fuit regio quae Gothum servum triumphali quodam servitio non haberet," Synesius, *de Regno*, 23 D.

[74] *Hermathena*, lxxxix (1957), 23 f.

[75] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 6, 5, Eunapius, frag. 42 (239, 17 and 20, Dindorf), Jordanes, *Get.*, xxvi, 135, cf. SHA., *Claud.*, vi, 6.

[76] On the alleged civil war between Fritigern and Athanaric see the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vii (1956), 6 f.

has been thoroughly explored it may well be found that Roman imports were as numerous there in the fourth century as they had been in Bohemia in the first century.

IV

The contemporary historian Eunapius speaks more than once of the tribes (*phylai* = no doubt *pagi*) of the Visigoths[77]; and these tribes sometimes associated together in a confederacy in order to achieve specific military aims. In 364 the assistance which the Visigoths sent to the usurping Emperor Procopius was despatched not by one confederate leader but by a number of chiefs, presumably tribal chiefs, independently.[78] Again, raids were carried out at many points along the Danube at this time, and the phrases which our authorities use to describe them suggest that they were the work of clan or tribal levies or of retinues.[79] But soon after 364 the tribes associated together in a confederacy, and Athanaric then makes his first appearance in history: he is the confederate leader.[80] This confederation of the tribes was maintained in existence for many years owing to the exceptional circumstances of the times—the war against Valens in 367–9, the attack of the Huns in 376, the flight from Gothia to the Roman provinces, and the subsequent struggle with the Romans. But when a temporary security returned at last to the people in 382—in that year they settled as Federates in the Roman province of Moesia —we seem to hear no longer of a confederate chief but once more of a plurality of leaders.[81] The confederation of the tribes was no longer necessary in the new conditions of peace and comparative security, and so it was dissolved and the tribes resumed their independent life until for reasons which are unknown the confederacy was revived once more for a time in the period 383–92 (n. 115 below). In the fourth century, then, the confederation was a temporary and recurring arrangement and did not exist continuously.

[77] Frag. 55 (248, 22, 26), 60 (251, 31). I do not discuss the evidence of Tacitus, *Germ.*, xliii, 6, on the Goths, for it relates to a time 250 years earlier than that under discussion, and it may in fact be inaccurate.

[78] Amm. Marc., xxvi, 10, 3. There is no trace of a confederate leader in Libanius, *Or.*, lix, 89 (A.D. 348–9), who speaks of their leaders in the plural; and yet there was a Judge in 347–8: Auxentius, 75, 21, ed. Kauffmann. See *Hermes*, lxxxiv (1956), 381.

[79] Themistius, *Or.*, x, 136C, Amm. Marc., xxvi, 4, 5, Zosimus, iv, 10, 1, cf. Seeck, *Untergang*, v, 88.

[80] Amm. Marc., xxvi, 6, 11. That Athanaric obtained his position as confederate leader only on the eve of the war of 367–9 was shown by T. Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, i, i (Oxford, 1892), 161, n. 1. The first fairly certain reference to him is, I think, Eunapius, frag. 37 (233, 27, 234, 13), cf. Zosimus, iv, 7, 2, referring to 366. Isidore, *Hist. Goth.*, 6 (*Chron. Min.*, ii, 269), says that Athanaric was king for 13 years (cf. the *Laterculus* of the Visigothic kings in *Chron. Min.*, iii, 464). Since his command terminated towards the end of 376, this figure (if we count inclusively) suggests 364 as the year of his election; and it is precisely in 364 that Ammianus describes the Visigothic clans as "conspirantem in unum." The tribes united and the confederate leader was chosen in that year. It is improbable, then, that Athanaric was the "sacriligious Judge" who expelled Ulfila in 347.

[81] Themistius, *Or.*, xvi, 210B (A.D. 383) *τοὺς ἐξάρχους καὶ κορυφαίους*, though this, of course, is scarcely conclusive.

The terms used by Roman writers to denote Visigothic military leaders fall into two classes. The first class consists largely of diminutives, *regalis, regulus, archon, basiliskos.*[82] It is unlikely that those chiefs who are referred to by diminutive names were military leaders of the entire people; and in fact several of them could hold their "office" at one and the same time. In a period for which information is particularly full Winguric, Atharid, and the unnamed "leader" (*archon*) of the *Passio S. Sabae* were in existence at the same time as the Judge Athanaric. This term "Judge" forms the second class of name given to Visigothic leaders. It is found in four entirely independent authors; and it is clear that *iudex, dikastes*, "judge," was a semi-technical or even an official name among the Romans for a certain type of Visigothic leader. Further, the Judge was a chief with powers superior to those of other chiefs.[83] Granting that the society as a whole was a tribal one, the interpretation of these facts is clear. The Judge is the confederate leader and only appears at a time when the tribes have associated in a confederacy, whereas the minor, subordinate chiefs are tribal leaders, the chiefs of *pagi*, whose existence is explicitly vouched for by Eunapius (though the *pagi* are not said to have been headed by chiefs in Tacitus' day).[84] There is no indication in any of our sources that there was a confederate leader in normal times of peace, and there is no reason to think that in the middle of the fourth century the Judge had to be chosen from any "royal clan." Indeed, there is ample evidence for the existence among the Visigoths of that dual leadership which is often attested among other Germanic peoples but which is never found where there was a "royal clan."[85]

The name "Judge" which the Romans gave to the confederate chief suggests that he had judicial functions of some kind (though there is no evidence that in Tacitus' day the military leader ever acted as a judge); but our authorities do not specify what these judicial functions may have been. Whether he had any religious duties is also obscure. During the persecution of the Christians in 369–72 Athanaric instructed some unspecified persons—and they may well have been priests—to place a cult object (*xoanon*) on a wagon, wheel it round

[82] *Passio. S. Sabae*, 219, 3, Anon. Vales., 27, Jordanes, *Get.*, xxvi, 135; and for the *archon* Wingurich see H. Delehaye, *Analecta Bollandiana*, xxxi (1912), 280, cf. H. Achelis, "Der älteste deutsche Kalender," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, i (1900), 308–35, at 319, no. 3 *init.*

[83] Amm. Marc., xxvii, 5, 6 and 9, xxxi, 3, 4, Ambrose, *de Spiritu Sancto* prol. 17 (Migne, *PL*, xvi, 736) *iudex regum*, Auxentius, 75, 21, ed. Kauffmann, Themistius, *Or.*, x, 134D (who in xi, 146B, 190D, more loosely refers to Athanaric as *dynastes*). There were also *iudices* among the Quadi: Amm. Marc., xvii, 12, 21.

[84] Eunapius, frag. 60 *init.*

[85] See Jordanes, *Get.*, xvi, 91, xxi, 112 (cf. SHA., *Gord.*, xxxi, 1 *Argunt*), Amm. Marc., xxxi, 4, 8, cf. 5, 5; Sueridus and Colias, *ibid.*, 6, 1, and see n. 115 below. Athanaric had no colleague, but when Isidore, *Hist. Goth.*, 6 (*Chron. Min.*, ii, 269), says that "Athanaric was the first of the Visigoths to undertake the administration of the people," we may wonder whether or not he means that Athanaric was the first confederate leader to be appointed without a colleague. The fact that Geberic (p. 27 below) had no known colleague means little, as our sources for his period are so defective.

to each tent where a Christian was known to live, and bid these Christians worship the object and make sacrifice.[86] So the Judge may have had influence, at any rate in some matters, over the priests, though there is no reason, of course, to suppose that his office was essentially a priestly one in the fourth century A.D. The Judge's major functions, however, in so far as they have been recorded, were neither judicial nor religious but military, for it was usually warfare that brought his office into being. In wartime he was the leader of the Visigothic forces. But the degree of centralization which a tribal society can achieve must not be exaggerated. When Athanaric led the resistance to the Huns in 376 he did not do so at the head of all the Visigothic warriors: a number of the clans took no part in the struggle and merely gave way to panic when they heard of Athanaric's defeat.[87] Again, the Judge's personal powers seem to have been little if at all greater than those of Arminius among the Cherusci. When the Romans referred to Athanaric as *basileus*, "king," he considered it important to repudiate the title and requested that he should be called "judge" instead, "for the former term implied authority, but the latter wisdom." The distinction was of importance to him and was still of importance to Jordanes, himself a Goth, nearly two centuries later; for he speaks of their "headmen and leaders (*primates et duces*) who commanded them instead of kings (*reges*)."[88] Accordingly, when the Judge wished to initiate any major change of policy or of strategy he proceeded by "persuading" and "urging" his followers, like Arminius long ago, and not by simply issuing direct orders to them.[89] Even after the Visigoths had entered the Roman Empire in 376 the chieftainship does not appear to have grown much stronger. Alaric would seem to have had little more power in this respect than Fritigern had had. He "consults" with his council and "recommends" plans, but he does not impose them, for the confederate council still retains its rights. The poet Claudian paints a vivid picture of Alaric consulting with and receiving criticism from his council; and the poet shows how fierce was the criticism of a leader by his people when his leadership became unpopular.[90] Athanaric did not negotiate alone with Valens in 369 but was accompanied by some other leading men.[91] The decision to enter Roman territory in 376 was only taken after prolonged deliberation by the majority of the people: it was not a personal decision on the part of Fritigern.[92] Such consultations could be

[86] Sozomen, vi, 37, 13.

[87] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 8, cf. the lack of co-operation with the rest of the Visigoths on the part of Sueridus and Colias and their men: *ibid.*, 6, 1.

[88] Themistius, *Or.*, x, 134D, Jordanes, *Get.*, xxvi, 134, cf. Tacitus, *Ann.*, ii, 44, 3, "Maroboduum regis nomen invisum apud populares . . . habebat." The distinction between the *duces* and the *rex* of the Lombards is made by Paulus Diaconus, *HL*, i, 14, and for the Franks cf. Greg. Tur., *HF*, ii, 9 *init.*, and *Chron. Min.*, i, 301, *s.a.* 451, "non enim tunc reges gens Francorum habebat sed ducibus contenti erant."

[89] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 6, 4, cf. 12, 9, *mollire, allicere*, Jordanes, *Get.*, xxv, 131.

[90] Claudian, *BG*, 479 ff., *vi cons. Hon.*, 242 ff., cf. Sidonius, *carm.*, vii, 452 f., Jordanes, *Get.*, xxix, 147.

[91] Amm. Marc., xxvii, 5, 9, Themistius, *Or.*, x, 132D.

[92] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 8, cf. Jordanes, *Get.*, xxv, 131, *communi placito.*

stormy and were sometimes the scene of sharp divisions of opinion, as they had been in the days of Arminius.[93] In fact, there seems to have been just as little individual authority in fourth-century Gothia as there had been in Germany in the first century.

Sometimes our Roman authorities regard the nobility as the decisive factor in wartime even when they were nominally serving under a confederate chief.[94] As for times of peace, the persecution of the Christians in Gothia in 369–72 was initiated by the confederate council while the tribal chiefs were merely responsible for seeing that the persecution was actually enforced.[95] When the council decided to persecute the Christians the tribal leaders went round the villages to see how the council's instructions were being carried out; and when a chief as representative of the council came to a village the members of the village council would appear before him and would give him the information which he required. But the tribal and confederate chiefs were simply the instruments through which the confederate council acted. In times of peace and indeed for the most part in wartime also even the confederate chief is not known to have had any power over the life, liberty and property of the tribesmen except in so far as he carried out the decisions of the council. What control did the council exercise over the chief? That the chiefs were elected in the period under discussion cannot be doubted, for more than one reference is made to the election of chiefs in the years 376–418, and a growth of popular rights in the interval may be ruled out as impossible.[96] And that the electoral body consisted of the council rather than of the assembled warriors will seem probable in a moment. We do not know whether the council also possessed the power to depose a chief. When Athanaric failed in his defensive operations against the Huns in 376 and was no longer able to secure a sufficient supply of food for his people, the people "deserted" him; and they re-appear under the leadership of Fritigern and others, none of whom is regarded as a rebel or usurper.[97] Perhaps the term "deposition" implies a more formal act than was in practice customary or necessary. Who composed the confederate council is not clear. Eunapius describes its members as men who were "outstanding in rank and birth," and they may well have been the chiefs of the tribes, whom he also mentions.[98] They were easily distinguishable from the humbler Visigoths by the more costly clothing which they wore and by their slaves; indeed, in 376 they were able to bribe the Roman commanders on the Danube by offering them quantities of linen and of tasselled rugs.[99] Archaeological

[93] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 16, 1.
[94] *Ibid.*, 7, 7–9, 15, 13.
[95] *Historia*, iv (1955), 334 f.
[96] Orosius, vii, 43, 10, Jordanes, *Get.*, xxx, 158, xxxiii, 174 f., Isidore, *Hist. Goth.*, 20 (*Chron. Min.*, ii, 276).
[97] Amm. Marc., xxxi, 3, 8 f.
[98] Frag. 60.
[99] *Idem*, frag. 42 (239, 2 f., 18). Slaves: *ibid.*, Amm. Marc., xxxi, 6, 5, Jordanes, *Get.* xxvi, 135, cf. SHA., *Claud.*, vi, 6.

finds show that the more well-to-do warriors among the Germanic peoples living to the west of the Visigoths possessed valuable and beautifully ornamented articles of personal adornment, weapons, and so forth; and there can be little doubt that further archaeological research in Rumania will show something of the richness and beauty of the personal possessions of the Visigothic optimates, too.[100]

What of the third great organ of government of which Tacitus spoke, the general assembly of the warriors? In St. Sabas' village, and so no doubt in all the villages of Gothia, there were meetings attended by the villagers at which affairs of common interest were discussed.[101] But there is no evidence that the gathering of Sabas' fellow-villagers could have discussed a matter which was not of purely local interest, a matter of policy affecting Gothia as a whole. It is improbable, for example, that before the persecution of the Christians began the question of whether it should be instituted at all was discussed at countless village assemblies up and down Gothia. In other words, the assembly at Sabas' village was a very different thing from, and was no substitute for, the assembly of the warriors of which Tacitus spoke. There is in fact no evidence to show that a general assembly of the warriors existed at all among the fourth-century Visigoths; and it can be taken as virtually certain—for our evidence for early Visigothic society is by no means negligible —that such an assembly did not exist.[102] There may have been religious festivals or ceremonies held at longer or shorter intervals at which the majority of the warriors would assemble and so would have an opportunity of discussing affairs of common interest. Such seem to have existed in Tacitus' day,[103] while the eleventh-century Swedes held a great festival every nine years at which the people would come together and no doubt could discuss whatever they wished to discuss, though in an unorganized way.[104] But if similar assemblies existed among the Visigoths our authorities say nothing of them. Again, when the whole host of the people went out to war the warriors could deliberate on questions of general importance; and in 376 "the greater part of the people" after lengthy deliberations decided to abandon Gothia and the war against the Huns and to enter the Roman provinces (p. 22 above). When Theodoric I was killed at the battle of the Catalaunian Plains in 451 the

[100] Note the golden shoe-buckle inset with garnets which is now preserved at Brasov: E. Beninger, *Der westgotisch-alanische Zug nach Mitteleuropa* (Leipzig, 1931), 32 f., with Figure 8.

[101] These village councils may have existed in some form until a very late date, though perhaps with different functions: *Legg. Visig.*, viii, 5, 6, "in conventu publico vicinorum."

[102] None of the passages cited by C. Sanchez-Albornoz, "El aula regia y las asambleas politicas de los Godos," *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, v (1946), 5–110, at 6–13, proves the existence of a general assembly. The *Vita Aviti* to which he refers is the *Vita S. Aviti in Petracoricis*, for which see *Acta Sanctorum*, iv, June 292–4: it is worthless as a source for the reign of Alaric II.

[103] *Germ.*, xxxix, 2.

[104] Adam of Bremen, iv, 27, though cf. H. M. Chadwick, *The Origin of the English Nation* (Cambridge, 1907), 298.

assembled Visigothic warriors proclaimed his son Thorismud as king.[105] But such cases are a very different thing from the holding of regular meetings at which the bulk of the tribesmen could have the final say on all matters of internal and external policy. This absence of the general assembly of the warriors is perhaps the most striking difference between the society of the Visigoths in Athanaric's time and the society of the Germans as a whole described by Tacitus. Although general assemblies of the villagers existed in the various villages for settling local affairs, popular control of the business of Gothia as a whole had been removed.[106] The optimates can now be said to wield political power, though they have not yet control of a State machinery which would make their power absolute.

In Tacitus' day the leading men had been acquiring power by means of their retinues. The evidence for the part played by this institution among the Visigoths before 376 is defective. In the early years of the kingdom of Toulouse (after 418) the retinue was an institution recognized by Visigothic law; and it had not come into existence in the first place as a result of the settlement in southern Gaul.[107] Reference is made in our authorities to the retinues of Athanaric, of Fritigern and Alavivus, and of Alaric, whose "companions" are carefully distinguished from his kindred.[108] Athanaric's "companions" deserted him after 378, for he had remained at peace, it seems, during the glorious campaigns of 377–80 so that his followers had no share in the renown and booty won by those who had followed Fritigern across the Danube; and Alaric, too, is said to have feared that failure would lead to his desertion by his retinue. In this respect at any rate the retinue was still what it had been in the first century: the "companions" remained with their leader only so long as he could ensure a steady intake of plunder and fame. The leader also gave arms and other gifts to his followers, just as he had done in Tacitus' day.[109] Again, when the tribal chief Atharid was helping to enforce the persecution of the Christians in Gothia he came to a village with "a company of lawless brigands" who referred to Atharid as their "master" (*despotes*) and who included one of

[105] Jordanes, *Get.*, xli, 215.

[106] It is not impossible, of course, that elected representatives of the rank and file took part in the deliberations of the optimates, just as at the council of the Old Saxons in the eighth century "solebant ibi omnes in unum satrapae [i.e. leaders of *pagi*] convenire, ex pagis quoque singulis duodecim electi nobiles totidemque liberi totidemque lati," *Vita Lebuini Antiqua* (Mon. Germ. Hist., Scriptores, xxx, 2, 793). But there is no hint in our sources of such a representative principle among any of the Germanic peoples of the Roman period. The nearest approach to it would seem to be the curious Marcomannic embassy which negotiated with Commodus in 180: Peter the Patrician, frag. 6. Note also Tacitus, *Germ.*, xxxix, 2, *legationibus*.

[107] *Cod. Euric.*, 310, 311, *Legg. Visig.*, v, 3, 1.

[108] Athanaric: Amm. Marc., xxvii, 5, 10, xxxi, 4, 13, Socrates, v, 10, 4, cf. L. Schmidt, *Geschichte der deutschen Stämme: die Ostgermanen* (Munich, 1934), 418, n. 2. Fritigern: Amm. Marc., xxxi, 5, 6. Jordanes, *Get.*, xxvi, 136. Alaric: Claudian, *vi cons. Hon.*, 314 f. There is a long and not very fruitful discussion of the Visigothic *comitatus* in C. Sanchez-Albornoz, *En Torno a los origines del Feudalismo* (Mendoza, 1942), i, 19–39.

[109] *Cod. Euric., loc. cit.* That the *buccellarii* were *comites* was shown by E. Oldenburg, *Die Kriegsverfassung der Westgoten*, Diss. Berlin, 1909, 29 f.

his sons among their number.[110] It is difficult to see what can have been the relationship of these men with their "master" if it was not that of a retinue with its leader; for the men were not slaves, and who else had a master in Gothia? If this phalanx was in fact Atharid's retinue, it is of the utmost interest to observe that it was used not in a plundering raid against another people but so as to enforce "order" at home and to coerce a refractory tribesman.[111]

Whatever may have been the form and the function of the retinue among the Visigoths at this date, the decay of their tribal system is not a matter of speculation. Quantities of property had begun to accumulate in private hands before 376, and political power was also tending to concentrate in private hands. This is strikingly illustrated in a vivid scene which is described in the *Passio S. Sabae.* When an unnamed tribal chief in the course of the persecution of 369–72 came to Sabas' village and heard that the saint was an unrepentant Christian, he turned to the members of the village council, who were present, and asked them whether Sabas owned any property. He was told that Sabas owned nothing more than the clothes on his back. Thereupon the chief considered the saint to be of no importance and said, "Such a man can neither help nor harm us," and ordered him to be driven from the village forthwith.[112] Clearly, at that date not only had private property associated itself in the chief's mind with social power but the poor man, unlike the man of property, could "neither help nor harm" the execution of the confederate council's resolutions. Sharp divisions of wealth had put an end to the general equality of the tribesmen.

Another indication of the growth of private wealth and of the consequent decay of the old social system is the tendency for the chieftainship to become hereditary and to descend from father to son, as it is not known to have done in the days of Tacitus. There is no valid evidence that a "royal clan" existed among the Visigoths before Alaric's time,[113] but Atharid was "the son of the kinglet (*basiliskos*) Rothesteus." The unnamed father of the Judge Athanaric was so powerful and important that Constantine had seen fit to appease him by erecting an equestrian statue of him in Constantinople: he was surely a Judge like his son after him.[114] Again, the "queen" Gaatha was the widow of a Judge; and when she wished to enter Roman territory she left the "kingdom"

[110] *Passio S. Sabae,* 219, 3, 220, 2 and 6.

[111] *Ibid.,* 220, 31 ff., though the men's inclination to set Sabas free and so to disobey Atharid's order to kill him does not reinforce our feeling that they may have been his retinue.

[112] *Passio S. Sabae,* 218, 11 ff.

[113] Nothing can be built on Zosimus, iv, 25, 2, 34, 3: see E. A. Thompson, *Attila and the Huns* (Oxford, 1948), 10. On the Balthi see P. Grierson, "Election and Inheritance in Early Germanic Kingship," *Cambridge Historical Journal,* vii (1941), 1–22, at 11 f.

[114] *Passio S. Sabae,* 219, 3, Themistius, *Or.,* xv, 191A. Add this to the list of equestrian statues in Constantinople drawn up by J. Kollwitz, *Oströmische Plastik der theodosianischen Zeitalter* (Berlin, 1941), 13 ff. Note the importance attached to the chief's son in Anon. Vales., xxxi, *Passio S. Sabae,* 220, 6.

(*basileia*) or the "power" (*exousia*) to her son Arimerius as a legacy; and her action is in no way described as illegitimate.[115] Now, lack of evidence makes it difficult to compare these examples of hereditary chieftainship with the practice of the Visigoths in earlier times. But there is some reason for thinking that it was an innovation, for in spite of their fame and heroism the father and the ancestors of Geberic (an early-fourth-century Visigothic chief) were not the leaders of the Visigoths as a whole: his predecessors in office were Ariaric and Aoric, who are not said to have been in any way related to him.[116] But if the confederate and tribal chieftainships sometimes descended from father to son later in the fourth century, that by no means implies that the son succeeded by any legal right and without election. Hereditary succession to the throne was never accepted by the Visigoths at any time in their recorded history.

Moreover, the confederate council was able to exert stronger pressure on the villages than the latter, we may suspect, would have submitted to in the days of Tacitus. Village affairs in the fourth century were discussed by a council of village elders or leading men and were then submitted to a general assembly of the villagers for approval or discussion.[117] But there is no evidence that the villagers could discuss matters of more than local interest. The confederate council's decision to persecute the Christians in 369–72 was in fact resisted by the villagers, or at any rate the villagers did without enthusiasm what they were ordered to do and tried to shelter their members from hurt.[118]

It seems, then, that a central authority consisting of the optimates, meeting in the confederate council, could dictate policy, at any rate in some matters, to the Visigoths at large; and there was no general assembly of the warriors to keep the optimates in check. Popular control of society had declined markedly as compared with the conditions described by Tacitus, and this can hardly be dissociated from the sharp differences of wealth which had now made their appearance in Gothia. An optimate is prepared to say openly and brutally that the opinion of a poor man carries no weight. But the optimates still lacked regular machinery for imposing their will on society as a whole. It was easy enough to coerce a single individual like Sabas; but how could they coerce a substantial number of warriors? Severe internal struggles took place between 376 and 418 before the old social organization could be wholly thrown off and a new one established in its place which gave the optimates coercive machinery.

[115] Delehaye, *art. cit.*, 279, where Gaatha is called *σύμβιος τοῦ ἑτέρου ἄρχοντος τοῦ ἔθνους τῶν Γότθων*, a phrase which distinctly implies the existence of the dual leadership, which is not attested for any other type of leadership except that of the people as a whole. The confederation of the tribes was therefore in existence at this time (383–92). There is no reason to think that Gaatha was Fritigern's widow. For parallels to her action see Grierson, *art. cit.*, 8 f.

[116] Jordanes, *Get.*, xxi, 112 ff., cf. xxxi, 162.

[117] *Historia*, iv (1955), 331–8.

[118] *Ibid.*, 337 f.

V

We have practically no detailed information about the religious beliefs and practices of the pagan Visigoths.[119] It is true that their very name "Visigoths" preserves something of their superstition, for while the term *Ostrogothi* means "East Goths," the name *Visigothi* or *Vesegothae* does not mean "West Goths," which would, we are told, be some such form as **Wistrogoti*. But like several other Germanic peoples (though unlike the Westphalians and the men of Wessex) they shrank from calling themselves by the name of the ill-omened West, where the sun sinks and dies away. And so they took the similarly sounding but better-omened name of *Visi* or *Vesi* (*Visigothi* does not appear until the fifth century) which means the "valiant" or "gallant" people; and their fear of the ill-omened West can be traced far into the fifth century.[120] But on the whole their subjective emotions and attitudes towards the gods, towards natural phenomena, and towards the outside world in general are very obscure. Of the evil spirits and demons, the spirits of the woodland, magic rites relating to the dead, and so on, we can say little more than that they existed or were thought to exist.[121]

Their religion was organized on a tribal basis when they crossed the Danube in 376. Each tribe which entered Roman territory possessed religious rites and ceremonies common to all its members. Each tribe carried across the river the sacred cult objects connected with these rites and was accompanied by the tribal priests and priestesses.[122] This tribal religion was carefully monopolized by the tribesmen and was not discussed with persons who were not members of the tribe. At any rate, Eunapius twice emphasizes the "profound and adamantine silence" which the Visigoths maintained about their rites and cult objects in conversation with the Romans.[123] But by a series of accidents the contents of a sacred treasury appear to have been preserved in the astonishing hoard of twenty-two gold objects found in 1837 at

[119] On Gothic paganism see esp. K. Helm, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (Heidelberg, 1937), ii, 1.

[120] H. Wehrle, "Die deutschen Namen der Himmelsrichtungen und Winde," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung*, viii (1906–7), 333–52, at 334–7, P. Kretschmer, "Austria und Neustria," *Glotta*, xxvi (1938), 207–40, esp. 231 ff.

[121] Helm, *op. cit.*, 22 ff. Apart from the evidence discussed here other details about Visigothic religion and religious practice could no doubt be elicited from the linguistic evidence (though Helm's work shows how little certainty the unsupported linguistic evidence has so far given) and even from archaeology. Thus, the inscribed ring found at Pietroassa is often thought to have been an oath-ring, on which see F. P. Magoun, "On the Old-Germanic Altar- or Oath-Ring," *Acta Philologica Scandinavica*, xx (1949), 277–93. For another example, the word *hraiwadubo*, see Helm, *op. cit.*, 22, H. Vetters, "Der Vogel auf der Stange—ein Kultzeichen," *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts in Wien*, xxxvii (1948), 131–50, some of whose arguments seem hazardous.

[122] Eunapius, frag. 55. The priests are also mentioned by Ambrose, *Ep.*, x, 9, of which the best text will be found in R. Egger, "Die Zerstörung Pettaus durch die Goten," *ibid.*, xviii (1915), Beiblatt 253–66. For parallels to the priestesses see J. de Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1937), 263 f., Chadwick, *op. cit.* (in n. 104 above), 317 ff., etc. Priestesses are not known to have existed at all among the contemporary West Germans.

[123] Eunapius, frag. 55 (248, 28, 249, 13).

the Rumanian village of Pietroassa (p. 12 above), a hoard which suffered many vicissitudes after its discovery and of which the last remnants finally disappeared in the turmoil of the years 1914–18. This treasure is commonly believed to have been buried amid the confusion of the Hunnic attack in 376.[124] It was composed exclusively of gold vases, cups, and ornaments of a sacerdotal nature, and it contained no weapons, no household utensils, and no women's jewelry; and we need have little hesitation in believing that these immensely valuable objects belonged to a sanctuary.[125] It would be of great interest to know whether this treasure was associated with a cult which was common to the Visigoths as a whole or whether the treasure was the possession of a tribe (*pagus*). If the former, nothing is known of this common cult or of the priests and ceremonies attached to it. No one priest, so far as is known, had the status among the Visigoths which the *sinistus* held in Burgundian society late in the fourth century; for the authority of the *sinistus* was superior to that of all other Burgundian priests and he was not liable to deposition, like their military leaders.[126] On the other hand, no priest is recorded to have played any part in the procedure which led up to the martyrdom of St. Sabas, of which we have a detailed description; and if a village priest had been at all prominent in bringing the saint to his doom, the author of the *Passio S. Sabae* would scarcely have missed the opportunity of drawing attention to him. Among the Visigoths, then, we hear only of tribal priests and priestesses, never of a clan or village priest and never of a priest of the people as a whole.[127] In this the Visigothic priesthood differs not only from that of the Burgundians but also from that of the Germanic peoples of whom Tacitus speaks, for the functions of the priests in the first century A.D. seem to have been almost confined to public ceremonies affecting the whole people: they took omens on public occasions, they had duties in connexion with the meetings of the assembly, and they had the guardianship of the sacred groves and of the holy emblems

[124] Odobesco, *op. cit.* (in n. 41), iii, 15 ff.

[125] The runic inscription on the armband, which is usually (though by no means always) transliterated as "gutan iowi hailag," cannot be interpreted as meaning "Sacred to the Jove of the Goths," as was first proposed by R. Loewe, "Der Goldring von Pietroassa," *Indogermanische Forschungen*, xxvi (1909), 203–8: see R. Meissner, "Die Inschrift des Bukarester Ringes," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, lxvi (1929), 54–60, 213–6, de Vries, *op. cit.*, ii, 94, Arntz and Zeiss, *op. cit.* (in n. 45 above), 79 ff., though the old interpretation is still given by T. Karsten, "Die Inschrift des Goldrings von Pietroassa," *Beiträge zur Runenkunde und nordischen Sprachwissenschaft = G. Neckel Festschrift* (Leipzig, 1938), 78–82. The precise meaning of *hailag* is disputed. It is not used by Ulfila, who perhaps avoided it in his translation of the Bible because its associations were too closely involved with pagan belief: Feist, *op. cit.* (in n. 1 above), 226 f., Helm, *op. cit.*, 54. But taken in conjunction with the nature of the objects of which the treasure was composed, the word certainly suggests the cult character of the treasure. With the armbands and necklaces of Pietroassa, cf. Ambrose, *loc. cit.*

[126] Amm. Marc., xxviii, 5, 14, cf. the *sacerdos civitatis* of Tacitus, *Germ.*, x, 2 and 4, the *primus pontificum* of the Northumbrians in Bede, *HE*, ii, 13, and the *princeps sacerdotum* of the South Saxons in Eddius, *Vita S. Wilfrithi*, xiii.

[127] Ulfila has to devise the word *ufargudja* to translate ἀρχιερεύς, though admittedly if the Visigoths had a special name for a pagan high priest Ulfila might not have cared to use it in his translation of the Bible.

kept in them. But they do not appear to have taken any part in any ceremony affecting a smaller unit of society than the people as a whole.[128] Whatever may have been the practice in the case of private sacrifice among the Visigoths, the essential point is that their priests were tribal priests and that there is no evidence for the existence of a high-priest of the whole people. Hence, it may not be too hazardous to assume that the treasure of Pietroassa was a tribal possession.

Of the character of Visigothic tribal worship we know that it included something like ancestor-worship, a common feature in tribal societies, for it both expresses and sanctions the authority exercised by the tribal leaders. According to Jordanes, they regarded their past leaders not as mere men but as demi-gods, that is, *Anses*, because it was by these men's fortune that they had been led to victory; and Ammianus pictures the Visigothic warriors as they went into battle "shouting the praises of their ancestors."[129] The name of the Anses is to be identified with that of the Scandinavian gods called *Aesir*, known from a much later period. In the interval since Jordanes' day, by a common process in primitive religion, ancestor-spirits have grown into outright gods. Unfortunately, we do not know what form was taken by the cult of the Anses. The worship of the dead leader may have been confined to the members of the tribe which he had led in his lifetime or it may have been unrestricted and open to all Visigoths.[130]

In the fourth century they worshipped gods as well as Anses. They worshipped, for instance, a god whom our Latin-speaking authorities call *Mars*.[131]. They vowed to Mars as their war-god the first fruits of their booty, they hung spoils on tree trunks in his honour, and the sacrifices offered to him may even in the fourth century have included human victims, prisoners of war.[132] Now, it can scarcely be doubted that these gods were common to all the Visigoths: they were not tribal gods, but the worship of them may well have

[128] H. M. Chadwick, "The Ancient Teutonic Priesthood," *Folk-Lore*, xi (1900), 268–300, at 270 ff.

[129] Jordanes, *Get.*, xiii, 78 (cf. v, 43, vi, 48—even though Thanausis was no Goth), Amm. Marc., xxxi, 7, 11, cf. Claudian, *BG*, 528, "di Getici . . . manesque parentum." The etymology of *Anses* has not been determined: on it see A. Krappe, "Anses," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Litteratur*, lvi (1932), 1–10, with bibliography, to which add E. Polomé, "L'Etymologie du terme germanique **ansuz*, 'Dieu souverain'," *Études germaniques*, viii (1953), 36–44, with further bibliography in the footnotes.

[130] The comparative evidence does not help us to decide this question: see G. Landtman, *The Origin of the Inequality of the Social Classes* (London, 1938), 125 ff.

[131] Jordanes, *Get.*, v, 41. Note, too, the reference of the Arian bishop Maximinus to the "Mars qui aput Tracias natus ibi est defunctus," *Journal of Theological Studies*, xvii (1916), 327. (On the ascription of that work to Maximinus see D. B. Capelle, *Revue bénédictine*, xxxiv (1922), 81–108, *ibid.*, xl (1928), 49–86.) These are the only references in ancient literature to a specific Visigothic deity.

[132] Jordanes, *loc. cit.* See de Vries, *op. cit.*, i, 251 f. Over 50 passages relating to human sacrifice have been collected from all over the Germanic world by E. Mogk, *Abhandlungen d. kön. sächsischen Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften: phil.-hist. Klasse*, lxxi, 17 (1909), 601–43. Jordanes seems to imply that the custom had been abandoned by the time the Goths settled on the shores of the Black Sea, but in view of Radagaisus' sacrifice in 406 this implication may not be wholly correct.

been organized on a tribal basis. Nothing that is known of either the Anses or the gods gives us reason to doubt Eunapius' statement that Visigothic religion was essentially a tribal affair. Moreover, during the persecution of the Christians in Gothia in 369–72 Athanaric ordered a *xoanon*[133] to be placed on a cart and wheeled round to the dwellings of persons suspected of being Christian, who were ordered to worship it and make sacrifice. No doubt the purpose of wheeling the *xoanon* about was normally to fructify the fields and animal life.[134] It is difficult to believe that the emblem was anything other than a tribal one. For if it had been unique and had been regarded as the holy possession of the entire people Athanaric would have been confronted with the task of wheeling it about from one end of Bessarabia to the other end of Transylvania, an improbable procedure whether it was drawn by the men themselves or by a lumbering team of cattle. In other words, our authority is dealing with a local incident of the persecution and is referring to the *xoanon* of the particular tribe to which those Christians belonged who were subsequently martyred: other tribes will have had other *xoana*. And if it is agreed that the *xoanon* was tribal, then the men who saw to its transportation, if they were priests at all, must have been tribal priests. And so the incident would form another piece of evidence for the tribal priesthood and for the tribal organization of religion which Eunapius explicitly mentions.

The only specific Gothic festival known to us is the Yule festival, which is attested in the surviving fragment of the Gothic Church Calendar, for in it November is called *fruma Jiuleis*, the "first Yule," the implication being that at least one other Yule followed it. This festival is also attested in month-names and other evidence among the Anglo-Saxons, the Norwegians, and the Icelanders. It was designed to help the seeds to germinate and to bring good crops, and what is of interest to us is that among the northern peoples, and hence perhaps among the Goths, too, it was not a festival celebrated at one central holy place by all the people together, but a local (probably clan or tribal) festival.[135]

[133] This may have been a wooden post like the Saxon Irminsul of a later time, cf. the somewhat similar Germanic gods in Ibn Fadlan's account of the northmen, translated by A. S. Cook, "Ibn Fadlan's Account of Scandinavian Merchants on the Volga in 922," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, xxii (1923), 58, and the much disputed figures in A. Banduri, *Imperium Orientale* (Venice, 1729), ii, 417, Figure ix, conveniently reproduced in H. Bradley, *The Goths* (London, 1891), 14. Banduri's figures, alleged to be reproduced from the Column of Arcadius, are ascribed mysteriously and apparently without reason to Gentile Bellini, who was in Constantinople in 1479: E. Müntz, "La colonne théodosienne à Constantinople," *Revue des études grecques*, i (1888), 318–25. There is nothing like them in any of the more trustworthy descriptions of Arcadius' Column, e.g. in E. H. Freshfield, "Notes on a Vellum Album, etc.," *Archaeologia*, lxxii (1922), 87–104. On the other hand, it is known that although these pictures are unreliable they are not wholly without some basis in reality: Kollwitz, *op. cit.* (in n. 114 above), 21 f., so that it would be desirable to know more about their origin before rejecting their authority outright.

[134] Sozomen, vi, 37, 13. Cf. the parallels in Tacitus, *Germ.*, xl, and in the *Indiculus Superstitionum et Paganiarum*, xxviii "de simulacro quod per campos portant," de Vries, *op. cit.*, i, 182 f., Chadwick, *op. cit.* (in n. 104 above), 220–51.

[135] M. P. Nilsson, *Opuscula Selecta* (Lund, 1951), i, 296–311, esp. 303. For what is known of Visigothic village religion see *Historia*, iv (1955), 331 ff.

The evidence, then, suggests that Visigothic religion was of a type that is in no way surprising in a developed tribal society. The essential point is that such evidence as is forthcoming—and it is obviously very meagre—never contradicts, and sometimes seems to support, the explicit assertion of Eunapius that Visigothic religion was organized on the basis of the tribes (*pagi*); and in fact there is no good evidence for the existence of any common cult or sanctuary or festival in which the whole people took part together. Now, a tribal religion does not proselytize: it has no adherents outside the members of the tribe, and we have mentioned the "adamantine" silence with which the Visigoths surrounded their cults when they came in contact with the Romans. What would happen, then, to the tribal religion when the tribal organization itself died away and when the former tribesman felt that no exceptional bond united him with those who had once been his kin? It seems certain that the tribal organization was destroyed when the Visigoths settled inside the Roman Empire after 376 and that the kindreds and *pagi* then ceased to have any significant existence. And it was in the years 382–95 that the people were in general converted to Christianity.[136]

E. A. THOMPSON

[136] This is argued in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* vii (1956), 1–11.

LE ROMAN DE SILENCE

BY HELDRIS DE CORNUÄLLE

THE MANUSCRIPT

Le roman de Silence is an unpublished Arthurian verse-romance written at some time in the second half of the thirteenth century by a completely unknown poet called Heldris de Cornuälle. The only extant copy of the poem forms part of a thirteenth-century manuscript which Lord Middleton has deposited on loan in the Muniments Room of the University of Nottingham. This manuscript, which now bears the number Mi.LM.6, has been roughly used. Its binding is broken, its front cover is missing, two quires are loose[1] and certain folios are lost. At some time, probably in the fourteenth century, MS. Mi.LM.6 was carefully repaired: ff. 1 to 5 and 8 to 11 were copied anew; fresh pieces of parchment were pasted on to ff. 25, 94 and 150 and the relevant lines written in; and rents in ff. 252, 259 and 260 were sewn up with yellow, green and brown thread. During the hundred years which followed, MS. Mi.LM.6 continued to receive hard usage. The fact that, probably in the fifteenth century, a certain John Bertrem signed his name on f° 345v°, the last folio of quire XXX, makes it likely that quire XXXI was already loose and no longer in the correct sequence, being kept instead at the front of the volume, where, there being no oaken cover, the recto of its first folio became badly stained with sunlight. At various times during its eventful history the manuscript has been violently handled, partly, it has been suggested, in time of war. What is more, it is an anthology with very varied contents likely to provide material of interest to many types of listeners and readers. One can therefore imagine that its legitimate use too was very frequent indeed.[2]

[1] Since I wrote this a number of other quires have broken away from the binding.

[2] MS. Mi.LM.6 has been described in print several times recently. When he was writing pp. 221–34 of his *Report on the manuscripts of Lord Middleton, preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, (Historical Manuscripts Commission)*, 1911, W. H. Stevenson worked through the manuscript with care, but he was mainly interested in listing its contents. L. M. Brandin had MS. Mi.LM.6 on loan at the British Museum when he was preparing from it his edition of *La chanson d'Aspremont, C.F.M.A.*, 2 vols, 1919–21, 2nd edn., 1923–4; but the few remarks he devotes to it (2nd edn., vol. I, pp. iii–vii), are not very detailed. C. H. Livingston borrowed the manuscript from Lord Middleton and described it summarily first in his article in the *Romanic Review*, vol. XV (1924), pp. 1–67 and then on pp. 13–14 of *Le jongleur Gautier le Leu, Harvard Studies in Romance Languages*, vol. XXIV, 1951. E. C. Armstrong made use of the relevant ff. of the MS. when preparing the five volumes of his series on the *Medieval French Roman d'Alexandre, Elliott Monographs 36–40*, Princeton, 1937–42. F. A. G. Cowper used photographic copies of ff. 157r° to 187v° for his various articles on *Ille de Galeron* and then more recently for his edition *Ille et Galeron par Gautier d'Arras, S.A.T.F.*, 1956. He also discussed the history of the manuscript at some length in his article *Origins and peregrinations of the Laval–Middleton Manuscript*, publ. in *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies*, vol. III (1959), pp. 1–18. I myself used the MS. for the articles referred to in nn. 26 and 28.

As it exists today MS. Mi.LM.6 contains 351 folios divided into quires as follows: Ia (ff. 1–5), containing 5 ff., of which the first is a single sheet; Ib (ff. 6–7), a double sheet; Ic (ff. 8–11), two double sheets, forming a small quire of its own; Id (f° 12), a single sheet which completes a rather miscellaneous first quire with a signature in the scribe's black ink; II to X (ff. 13–120), nine quires of 12 ff. each, all of them with a black ink signature; XI to XV (ff. 121–180), five quires of 12 ff. each, all of them with a signature in red ink; XVI (ff. 181–187), containing 7 ff. of which the first is a loose sheet, f° 187v° having a signature in red ink; XVII (ff. 188–195), containing 8 ff., with a signature in red ink; XVIII (ff. 196–211), containing 16 ff., with a signature in red ink; XIXa (ff. 212–221), containing 10 ff. without signature; XIXb (ff. 222–223), a double sheet without signature; XX to XXII (ff. 224–259), three quires of 12 ff., each with a red signature; XXIII (ff. 260–269), containing 10 ff., with on f° 269v° a red signature XXIII and a black signature I; XXIV to XXV (ff. 270–293), two quires each containing 12 ff., with red signatures, f° 281v° having a black II in addition to the red XXIV[3]; XXVI (ff. 294–301), containing 8 ff., with a red signature; XXVII to XXVIII (ff. 302–325), two quires each containing 12 ff., with red signatures; XXIX (ff. 326–335), containing 10 ff., with a red signature; XXX (ff. 336–345), containing 10 ff., without a signature[4]; and XXXI (ff. a–f), containing 6 ff., without a signature.[5]

[3] One is immediately tempted to suggest that quires XXIII and XXIV once formed the beginning of a separate volume and were originally numbered I and II. In effect f° 260, the first of XXIII, and f° 281, the last of XXIV, are both well inside the same text, *La chanson d'Aspremont*. What is more, the same hand runs on from f° 259 to f° 260 and from f° 281 to f° 282.

[4] One can assume that quire XXX lacks two folios, one at the beginning and one at the end, there being a break after f° 335v° and another break after f° 345v°. As I show on p. 36 the 48 × 2 × 2 lines which are lacking after f° 335v° consisted originally of the last 90 lines of *La Vengeance Raguidel* and of the beginning of the fabliau *Li .iii. sohait*. The missing conclusion of *La Vengeance Raguidel* would just about fill the recto of this lost folio, leaving 6 blank lines at the bottom of col. *b*. It is logical to suppose that *Li .iii. sohait* started originally at the top of col. *a* of the verso, i.e. that 96 lines are missing, less perhaps one or two for an initial. C. H. Livingston, *op. cit.*, p. 141, writes of the Middleton version of *Li .iii. sohait*, which is the sole extant copy: "Le poème est amputé des premiers vers où aurait pu figurer le nom de l'auteur. Heureusement le récit n'est pas mutilé par cette perte qui ne supprime évidemment que peu de texte." The position after f° 345v° is more complex. The last line copied at the bottom of col. *b* of f° 345v° is line 84 of *D[ou] prestre ki perdi les colles*. In the complete text of this fabliau which C. H. Livingston prints from MS. Berne, Bibl. de la Ville 354, *op. cit.*, pp. 222–32, there are 314 lines in all, but our line 84 brings us only to line 80 of the Berne manuscript. About 234 lines of *D[ou] prestre ki perdi les colles* seem then to be lacking in MS. Mi.LM.6. The folio lacking at the end of quire XXX would account for 192 of these lines, at 48 × 2 × 2 lines per folio. Clearly enough, at least one other folio is missing, at the beginning of quire XXXI. Folio *a* (= f° 346) of quire XXXI, which is badly stained and only partly legible, starts straight away at the beginning of the anonymous fabliau [*De la dame escolliee*] with the line:

[S]egnor, vos qui femes avés. . . .

[*continued on page 35*]

MS. Mi.LM.6 is copied on sheets of vellum which are not always of the best quality. Each sheet measures $7\frac{4}{5}$ in. × $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. or 20 × 28 cm. The pages are divided into two columns and each column normally contains 48 lines of script. The work of compiling and copying seems to have been done by a number of scribes, none of whom names himself; but *Le roman de Silence*, which runs from f° 188r° to f° 223r°, appears to be copied in a single hand.

The contents of MS. Mi.LM.6 have been listed efficiently by the late W. H. Stevenson[6] of St. John's College, Oxford, and more recently by F. A. G. Cowper.[7] For ease of reference I give the list again here:

(1) Ff. 1r° to 156r°.[8] A poem with no title, which is the complete text of *Le roman de Troie* by Benoît de Sainte-More. This copy was known neither to A. Joly nor to L. Constans.

(2) Ff. 157r° to 187v°.[9] A poem with no title, which is the complete text of the *Ille et Galeron* of Gautier d'Arras. This copy was known neither to E. Löseth nor to W. Förster. It was used by F. A. G. Cowper.[10]

(3) Ff. 188r° to 223r°.[11] A poem with no title, which is the complete text of *Le roman de Silence*.

(4) Ff. 224r° to 243v°. A poem entitled *C'est d'Alixandre*, which is part of *Le roman d'Alixandre* of Lambert li Tors and Alexandre de Bernay. This copy was known neither to H. Michelant nor to F. le Court de la Villethassetz and E. Talbot. The

Apart from the many words which are now illegible this fabliau of 680 lines seems complete as it stands in MS. Mi.LM.6; and, indeed, the version printed by A. de Montaiglon and Gaston Raynaud in *Recueil général et complet des fabliaux des XIIIe et XIVe siècles*, Paris, 1872–90, vol. VI, pp. 95–116, has only 618 lines. In that case, the last 32 lines of *D[ou] prestre ki perdi les colles* would have filled most of col. *a* of the recto of the folio lost at the beginning of quire XXXI. It is idle to speculate as to what was copied on col. *b* of the recto and on the two columns of the verso. Maybe they were blank. Maybe, on the contrary, quire XXXI lacks more than one folio at its beginning, and another complete fabliau was originally copied between the end of *D[ou] prestre ki perdi les colles* and the beginning of [*De la dame escolliee*].

[5] What happened after f° f (= f° 351) of the manuscript cannot be surmised. If one or two or even three folios are missing at the beginning of quire XXXI, then, to make a full quire, up to three folios may be lacking at the end of quire XXXI. Originally there may even have been more quires. At the bottom of col. *b* of f° fv°, Marie de France's fable *De le cugnie* breaks off at its fifteenth line.

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[6] *Loc. cit.* in n. 2.

[7] See his article in *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies*, vol. III (1959), pp. 1–18, referred to in n. 2.

[8] F° 5v° has half of col *a* and the whole of col *b* blank. F° 11v° has most of col. *b* blank. F° 156v° is completely blank.

[9] F° 187v° has half of col. *a* and all of col. *b* blank.

[10] *Ed. cit.* in n. 2.

[11] F° 223r° has most of col. *b* blank. The whole of f° 223v° is blank.

fragment corresponds with the lines printed by H. Michelant from page 93, line 1, to page 211, line 13.[12]

(5) Ff. 244v° to 303v°.[13] A poem entitled *C'est d'Iaumont et d'Agoulant*, which is the complete text of *La chanson d'Aspremont*. This copy was not known to I. Bekker nor to F. Guessard and L. Gautier, but it is the version used by L. M. Brandin for his edition of 1919–21.[14]

(6) Ff. 304r° to 335v°. A poem entitled *Del roi Artut*, which contains all but the last 90 lines of *La Vengeance Raguidel* sometimes attributed to Raoul de Houdenc. This copy was not known to C. Hippeau or to M. Friedwagner.[15]

(7) F° 336r°, top of col. *a*, to top of col. *a* of f° 337r°. 191 lines of a fabliau which has no title, since its beginning is missing. It is the fabliau *Li. iij. sohait*, extant in this unique copy.[16] In so far as there is in all probability one complete folio missing between f° 335v° and f° 336r°, and as *La Vengeance Raguidel* lacks 90 lines at the end, it is logical to suppose that *Li. iij. sohait* started originally at the top of the verso of the lost folio, i.e. that 96 lines are missing, less one or two for the initial.[17]

(8) Ff. 337r°, col. *a*, to 338v°, col. *b*. The fabliau *Del fol vilain* by Gautiers li Leus.[18]

(9) Ff. 338v°, col. *b*, to 341v°, col. *a*. The fabliau *Li provance de femme* by Gautiers li Leus.[19]

(10) Ff. 341v°, col. *a*, to 343r°, col. *b*. The fabliau *De l'aventure d'Arderene* by Gautiers li Leus.[20]

(11) Ff. 343r°, col. *b*, to 344r°, col. *a*. The fabliau *De .ij. vilains* by Gautiers li Leus.[21]

[12] H. Michelant, *Li romans d'Alixandre par Lambert li Tors et Alexandre de Bernay*, publ. in *Bibl. des Lit. Vereins*, Stuttgart, 1846, vol. XIII.

[13] The whole of f° 244r° is blank. F° 251 is badly torn, with most of col. *b* missing. F° 265 is slightly torn and lacks a few lines of col. *b*. Most of col. *b* of f° 303v° is blank.

[14] *Ed. cit.* in n. 2.

[15] M. Friedwagner, *Raoul von Houdenc, Sämtliche Werke nach allen bekannten Handschriften herausgegeben . . .*, 2 vols., Halle, 1897–1909. Cp. M. Friedwagner, *Die Vengeance Raguidel nach der Middleton Handschrift, Zeitsch. f. rom. Phil.*, XXXIX (1919), pp. 584–607 and Lewis Thorpe, *Notes sur le texte de La Vengeance Raguidel, Romania*, LXXII (1951), pp. 387–96, LXXIII (1952), pp. 93–108.

[16] See C. H. Livingston, *Le jongleur Gautier le Leu*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1951, pp. 141–6 for text, with title *Les sohais*.

[17] See n. 2 and n. 4.

[18] *Op. cit.* in n. 16, pp. 148–58.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 165–83, with title *La veuve*. See also Montaiglon and Raynaud, *op. cit.* in n. 4, vol. II, pp. 197–214.

[20] See Livingston, *op. cit.* in n. 16, pp. 186–97, with title *Del sot chevalier*.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 201–6.

(12) Ff. 344r°, col. *a*, to 345v°, col. *a*. The fabliau *De Dieu et dou Pescour* by Gautiers li Leus.[22]

(13) Ff. 345v°, col. *a*, to 345r°, col. *b*. The fabliau *D[ou] prestre ki perdi les colles* by Gautiers li Leus.[23]

(14) Ff. a r°, col. *a*, to d v°, col. *a*. An anonymous fabliau [*De la dame escolliee*].[24]

(15) Ff. d v°, col. *a*, to e r°, col. *a*. An anonymous fabliau *Des .iij. commandemens*.[25]

(16) Ff. e r°, col. *a*, to e v°, col. *b*. A poem of 127 lines entitled *Li dis Raoul de Hosdaing*.[26]

(17) Ff. e v°, col. *b*, to f v°, col. *b*. An anonymous fabliau *De l'arme ki guangna paradis par plait*.[27]

(18) F° f v°, col. *b*. The first fifteen lines of Marie de France's *De le cugnie*.[28]

The manuscript which contains *Le roman de Silence* among so many other poems is not an ornate one. Throughout the different works each paragraph or section is introduced by a capital coloured in red or blue, these colours alternating on most folios, the red capitals being ornamented in the usual way by blue filigree work and the blue with red. In eight-two places these water-colour initials are replaced by small miniatures of fairly rough workmanship about which L. M. Brandin has written simply: "leur style est du troisième quart du XIIIe siècle."[29] In the folios containing *Le roman de Silence* there are fourteen miniatures, all but three of them probably by the same artist. The three exceptions are numbers (9), (11) and (12) in the following list, these being stock decorations which bear no relationship to the story at all.

(1) F° 188r°. Apparently a portrait of the poet Heldris de Cornuälle, with a bearded face and long hair crowned by a green cap,

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 211–7.

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 220–2, with title *De Connebert*. Cp. Montaiglon and Raynaud, *op. cit.* in n. 4, vol. V, pp. 160–70. See n. 4 for a discussion of the break in the manuscript after f° 345.

[24] Cp. Montaiglon and Raynaud, *op. cit.* in n. 4, vol. VI, pp. 95–116.

[25] *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 175–7. Cp. Thomas Wright, *Anecdota Literaria*, London, 1844, pp. 64–5.

[26] For a critical edition see Lewis Thorpe, *Raoul de Houdenc: a possible new poem*, in *Modern Language Review*, XLVII, 4 (1952), pp. 512–5. Cp. also Thomas Wright, *op. cit.* in n. 25, pp. 55–9.

[27] See Montaiglon and Raynaud, *op. cit.* in n. 4, vol. III, pp. 209–14. Cp. T. B. W. Reid, *Twelve fabliaux*, Manchester University Press, 1958, pp. 19–22.

[28] Publ. by K. Warnke, *Die Fabeln der Marie de France, Bibliotheca Normannica*, Halle, 1898, p. 168. For the text of MS. Mi.LM.6 see Lewis Thorpe, *Les Fables de Marie de France: un nouveau fragment de manuscrit, Scriptorium*, IV, 1 (1950), pp. 102–4.

[29] *Op. cit.* in my n. 2, vol. I (2nd edn. (1923), p. vii).

wearing a green robe and a red mantle and seated on a blue throne. With his left hand he reaches up to turn the pages of a volume placed on a lectern. The background of the miniature is gold and the frame red with a pink inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital M.

(2) F° 195v°. The Count of Chester talks to Eufemie. He stands on the left, bareheaded and clad in a blue robe and red mantle, with a sceptre in his right hand and with his left hand raised. Eufemie is bareheaded except for a fillet and wears a white robe with a girdle and a blue mantle. The background of the miniature is gold and the frame red with a pink inner edge.

(3) F° 199r°. The figures are very faded. The nurse (?) stands on the left, bareheaded and in a white robe, with the baby Silence clad in blue in her arms. Eufemie (?), bareheaded and in a green robe, stands on the right, with her right hand raised as she speaks to the nurse. The background is gold and the frame red with a pink inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital P.

(4) F° 201r°. Two men, possibly the seneschal and Cador, are in conversation. The seneschal stands on the left in a green robe and red mantle; and Cador, whose face is obliterated, sits on the right on a green throne, wearing a blue robe and red mantle and addressing the seneschal. The background is gold and the frame blue with a light inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital S.

(5) F° 203r°. The child Silence stands between the two jongleurs (?), holding the hand of the one on his right. The jongleur on the left wears a white robe and a red mantle; the one on the right a red robe with a black and white girdle and a blue mantle. Silence wears a red robe and a blue mantle. The background is gold and the frame blue with a light blue inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital A.

(6) F° 206v°. An old man talks to Cador. Cador stands on the right with some sort of a coronet on his head and wears a blue robe and a red mantle. The old man is bareheaded and wears a green robe and a blue mantle. The background is gold and the frame red with a pink inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital Q.

(7) F° 209r°. The miniature is set in a double round arch, to signify Queen Eufeme's private apartments. Queen Eufeme sits on the right of a double throne, with a crown on her head and wearing a green robe with a red mantle. Silence sits

beside her wearing a red robe and a green mantle. The background is gold, the archway red with a pink inner edge, the frame and the throne blue.

(8) F° 211r°. Silence presents her letter to the King of France. The King sits on his throne to the right, wearing his crown and clad in a red robe and green mantle. Silence, bareheaded, kneels on the left, wearing a blue robe and a red mantle. The background is gold and the frame blue with an inner edge of lighter blue.

(9) F° 213r°. A large blue-grey dog painted against a gold background, with a red frame edged within with pink.

(10) F° 214v°. King Ebains' chancellor, let out of prison, explains to the King how the letter was changed. The King sits on the right, wearing a fillet, a green robe and a red mantle. The chancellor kneels on the left, wearing a red robe and a belt, with his badge of office, a wallet with a black fleur-de-lis, attached to his belt. The background is gold and the frame blue with a light blue inner rim. The miniature stands instead of a capital S.

(11) F° 217r°. A bird with a griffon's head—head and body red, wings blue and tail green. The background is gold, the frame blue with a lighter blue inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital U.

(12) F° 218v°. A bird with a serpentine head—head and body blue, legs and claws white and wings red. The background is gold and the frame red with an orange-pink inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital C.

(13) F° 221r°. Merlin, faceless, sits on a red rock. He wears blue trousers and a green mantle. The background of the miniature is gold and the frame blue with a light blue inner edge.

(14) F° 222v°. The miniature is much faded. Silence, a dim white figure, stands naked on the left, facing King Ebains, who has a gold crown, a white robe and a blue mantle. The background is gold and the frame red with an orange-pink inner edge. The miniature stands instead of a capital O.

As stated on p. 35, although ff. 188r° to 223r° which contain *Le roman de Silence* are probably in the hand of a single scribe, it is quite clear that MS. Mi.LM.6 as a whole is the work of several copyists. The manuscript is an anthology and as it stands at the moment it contains 351 folios. Is it possible that before these folios were bound up as a single volume they existed as several separate manuscripts? A

comparison of the contents set out on pp. 35–7 with the list of quires given on p. 34 shows that *Le roman de Troie* ends on the recto of the last folio of quire XIII and *Ille et Galeron* starts on the recto of the first folio of quire XIV; that *Ille et Galeron* ends on the verso of the last folio of quire XVI and *Le roman de Silence* begins on the recto of the first folio of quire XVII; that *Le roman de Silence* ends on the recto of the last folio of quire XIXb and *C'est d'Alixandre* begins on the recto of the first folio of quire XX; that *C'est d'Alixandre* ends on f° 243v° well inside quire XXI and *La chanson d'Aspremont* begins on f° 244v° inside the same quire; that *La chanson d'Aspremont* ends on f° 303v° inside quire XXVII and *La Vengeance Raguidel* starts on f° 304r° inside the same quire; and that *La Vengeance Raguidel* ends on the verso of the last folio of quire XXIX and the fabliaux begin on the first page of quire XXX. The hand unquestionably changes between f° 156r° and f° 157r°, and between f° 187v° and f° 188r°. L. M. Brandin was convinced, and I agree with him, that ff. 244v° to 303v° which contain *La chanson d'Aspremont* were the work of two different scribes.[30] C. H. Livingston maintained, again rightly in my opinion, that his fabliaux were copied by a different scribe and on inferior parchment.[31] To this evidence of different handwritings and slightly varying dialects of the copyists and to the fact that at least four of the major works begin on the first page of a new quire are to be added the curious double signatures on ff. 269v° and 281v°, both of these last, however, occurring well inside *La chanson d'Aspremont.* Any discussion of the date of the copying of MS. Mi.LM.6 as a whole is therefore made more complicated by a reasonable suspicion that certain sections of the manuscript may have had a separate existence before they were bound up as a single volume.

In view of the complications described in the previous paragraph, it is perhaps not surprising that the competent palaeographers who have attempted to date MS. Mi.LM.6 on the evidence of handwriting and decoration have differed from each other in their pronouncements although not in their dogmatism. W. H. Stevenson, describing the manuscript as a whole, considered it to be "written in an early thirteenth century hand."[32] According to L. M. Brandin, who was interested mainly in ff. 244v° to 303v°, "toutes (les miniatures) sont

[30] "Tous deux écrivent en picard; mais le dialecte du premier est le picard-wallon, tandis que celui du second est le picard aux limites de la Normandie." *Op. cit.* in n. 2, 2nd edn., vol. I, p. vii. The division comes one-third of the way down f° 261v°, col. *b*, at line 3293 in the printed text.

[31] "Mais le scribe qui a copié les fabliaux est certainement autre que ceux qui ont exécuté le reste du manuscrit. De plus le vélin sur lequel les fabliaux sont écrits est de qualité différente et inférieure et ces feuillets pourraient fort bien avoir été ajoutés au manuscrit principal." *Op. cit.* in n. 2, p. 13.

[32] *Op. cit.* in n. 2, p. 221.

certainement de la même main et leur style est du troisième quart du XIIIe siècle. L'écriture est de la même époque."[33] C. H. Livingston, thinking only of ff. 337r° to 345v°, quotes the opinion on the handwriting of C. Samaran, to whom he had shown photostats: "Dans l'ensemble M. Samaran placerait le texte dans le dernier quart du XIIIe siècle et certainement pas après le première décade du XIVe siècle."[34] Livingston also quotes C.-V. Langlois as having written of the manuscript: "Il est français de la fin du XIIIe siècle ou des premières années du XIVe."[35] It will be observed that Stevenson, Brandin, Samaran and Langlois gradually move the date of copying forwards from the early thirteenth century to the beginning of the fourteenth.

Any evidence of dating gleaned from an examination of the contents of the anthology is similarly vitiated if one entertains doubt as to its having always existed as a single volume. For the most part the works listed on pp. 35–7 can be assigned with some safety to the second half of the twelfth century or the first decade of the thirteenth. The outstanding exceptions, if *Le roman de Silence* is left on one side, are the fabliaux of Gautiers li Leus. C. H. Livingston proves that *Li provance de femme* was written after 1248[36]; and he suggests that *De .ij. vilains* was written after 1267.[37] From this he concludes that "Gautier Le Leu a vécu au XIIIe siècle et que sa carrière s'est prolongée bien après 1250."[38]

Later on in my consideration of *Le roman de Silence* I propose to examine the literary sources and the language of the poem. I shall show that the main literary source—when works too early to help with the dating have been put on one side—is *L'Estoire Merlin*, dated approximately 1230, of which prose work lines 5779–6706 are a free adaptation. The language is that of the second half of the thirteenth century; and I find it difficult to be more precise.[39] When all the evidence of handwriting, decoration, contents and language is taken into account, such an approximate statement seems the only possible one for the manuscript as a whole: that it was compiled and copied at some time between 1250 and 1300, probably nearer the end of the century than the beginning.

[33] *Op. cit.* in n. 2, 2nd edn., vol. I, p. vii.
[34] *Op. cit.* in n. 2, p. 14.
[35] *Idem*, p. 14.
[36] *Idem*, p. 99.
[37] *Idem*, p. 96.
[38] *Idem*, p. 100.
[39] I shall, of course, attempt to differentiate between the language of the scribe and that of the poet, for it most unlikely that ff. 188r° and 223r° are an autograph of Heldris de Cornuälle.

Three indications of the history of the manuscript are contained in marginalia. F° 244r°, which is otherwise blank, has in the left-hand upper corner a scribbled note in what appears to be a northern French hand of the fourteenth century: *le ior de mardi/por donpere.* At the top of the left-hand margin of f° 249v° are written in a French hand of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the words *Cest livre est/Madame de la/Val.* Half-way up the left-hand margin of f° 345v° is written in a fifteenth-century English hand: *Johñ Bertrem de Thorp Kilton.* In view of the statement on f° 249v° it seems a fair conclusion that, of the many places in France called Dompierre and Dompaire, the *donpere* mentioned on f° 244r° is Dompierre-du-Chemin (Ille-et-Vilaine, arr. of Fougères) on the main road from Laval to Fougères and only 37 kilometres from Laval itself. It is ironic that we know the day in the week when something was to happen at Dompierre-du-Chemin, but not the month or year, or, indeed, what the event was![40] The reference to the Laval family was noticed by L. M. Brandin[41]; and it has been considered at length by F. A. G. Cowper.[42] Cowper's suggestion is that MS. Mi.LM.6 was copied for Béatrix de Gavre, either on the occasion of her marriage to Guy IX, seigneur de Laval, about 1286, or soon after that marriage, and that it then remained among the treasures of the château de Laval (Mayenne) until the town and castle were looted by John Talbot, later Earl of Shrewsbury, in March 1428. For Cowper it was Anne de Laval,

[40] In his introduction to *La chanson d'Aspremont, op. cit.*, in n. 2, 2nd edn., vol. I, pp. iii–xi, L. M. Brandin completely ignores the Donpere reference. So does F. A. G. Cowper in his article in *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies*, vol. III (1959), pp. 1–18. W. H. Stevenson failed to notice either the Donpere reference or the Laval one. It is right to add that I am not sure that *por* is correctly transcribed.

[41] *Op. cit.* in n. 2, 2nd edn., vol. I, p. iii and n. 2. Brandin makes nothing of it, saying merely "il s'agit probablement d'un membre de la famille des seigneurs Laval"!

[42] *Origins and peregrinations of the Laval–Middleton Manuscript*, publ. in *Nottingham Mediaeval Studies*, vol. III (1959), pp. 1–18. I examined the Laval inscription again on 20 January 1960. There are a number of blurred marks round the top of the long downstrokes of the *l* of *livre* and of the pot-hook *s* of *est*, and after the word *Val* is written what to the naked eye in ordinary light seems to be a partly defaced *sr*. I decided to look at these markings under the ultra-violet lamp. The blurred markings are only decorative dots or ink splutterings, and the apparent *sr* is merely a flourish of the pen; but a few centimetres lower down the page than the Laval inscription, completely invisible in normal light the lamp revealed an additional statement: *quant chal/m̃ ot einsin/espleitié.* The handwriting of this addition is rough and sprawling. Logically it must have been written after the Laval inscription, although, indeed, it seems to be in an older hand. In intention it has been completely removed by rubbing and by treatment with some fluid, and the hardly visible circle of stain produced by this fluid stretches upwards to include the Laval inscription itself, which is pale. For some time this remained an exciting enigma. On 5 June 1961 Mr. W. P. Gerritsen of the University of Utrecht observed another scribbled note, again almost washed out, at the foot of col. b of f° 249v°. It gradually dawned upon us that the words in the left-hand margin were merely line 1003 of *La Chanson d'Aspremont* copied by a doodler, *Quant Carlemaines ot ensi esploitié.* When we had solved the old problem, the new one solved itself: *quant chalm̃ ot einsin.*

eventual wife of Jean de Montfort, who wrote her name on f° 249v°, at some time before the sack of 1428. The manuscript would have formed part of the loot of Talbot's army, the front cover being torn off deliberately, since the red leather which originally adorned the oaken boards probably bore the Laval arms. It would thus have come to England as plunder of war. The John Bertrem of Thorpe Kilton in the North Riding, who inscribed his name in Latin on f° 345v°, writes Cowper, may perhaps have been Sir John Bertram, baron of Bothal, *c.* 1382–1449, who himself was possibly at the sack of Laval.[43] What is more certain is that Bertrams married Willoughbys and that Willoughbys married Middletons, and so by sale, inheritance or gift MS. Mi.LM.6 came to Wollaton Hall, where it remained unnoticed until it was discovered and described by W. H. Stevenson in 1911.

The Author and the Date of Composition

No mention of the poet Heldris de Cornuälle exists outside this poem. In *Le roman de Silence* he names himself twice. At the beginning of the work he writes:

> [M]aistres Heldris de Cornuälle
> Escrist ces viers trestolt a talle. (1–2).

Towards the end of the poem he gives his name a second time:

> Maistre Heldris dist chi endroit
> C'on doit plus bone feme amer
> Que haïr malvaise u blasmer. (6682–84).

Apart from thus naming himself twice, Heldris makes no conscious attempt to give any information about himself. Certain things about him one may deduce, although such deductions are far from trustworthy. There is no evidence in the poem that he was or had been

[43] I find it impossible to accept my good friend Professor Cowper's suggestions in their entirety. In so far as they concern Béatrix de Gavre and John Talbot's army they are at least arguable. That Anne de Laval, or her agent, wrote on f° 249v° is as good a guess as any other. What seems much more open to question is the identification of *Johñ Bertrem de Thorp Kilton* with Sir John Bertram of Bothal, born John Ogle. In his admirable biographical sketch of Sir John in *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, Manchester University Press, 1954, pp. 151–2, Professor J. S. Roskell writes of him: "He did, however, participate for a short time in the French wars, going abroad for a little while in the summer of 1419, during which he acted as keeper of the castle of Fronsac in the Bordelais." There is no evidence that he was at Laval in 1428. If between 1428 and 1449 he acquired the manuscript from someone who had been there, he would presumably have signed de Bothal, the castle and manor of Bothal having been settled on him in tail male in 1403, at the moment when he changed his surname from Ogle to Bertram. L. M. Brandin's statement that ". . . c'est probablement Sir Henry Willoughby, membre de la cour de Henry VIII . . . et collectionneur de livres, qui en a fait l'acquisition" (*op. cit.* in n. 2, 2nd edn., vol. I, p. iii), i.e. who later brought the manuscript into the Willoughby family, is another guess of which one can make what one wishes.

a churchman, although in Cador's prayer for assistance against the dragon in 427–72 he shows a fair knowledge of the life of Christ, while in 3705–8 he gives a brief résumé of the story of Joseph and in 6028–83 a digest of that of Adam and Eve. As against these commonplace references, wherever Heldris has occasion to mention priests his scorn is only too clear, e.g. 2101–5 where Cador brusquely rejects the prayers and sympathy of the priest on the occasion of Silence's pretended illness, and 6359–70 where Merlin tells us that it is the priest who has seduced the village woman and who is the father of her dead son. He is conversant with the life led at a nobleman's or a king's court, possibly from first-hand experience, possibly from his reading; and he describes in considerable detail a royal wedding 191–354, an important baptism 2083–2126, the education of a nobly-born child 2359–2400, a tournament 5132–56, a full-scale battle 5327–5655 and much intermittent love-making in high places, 3723–3894, 4037–74 and 5704–45. He has a certain legal knowledge, in 313–26 describing the promulgation by King Ebains of a new law forbidding the inheritance of wealth or title through the female line and in 4459–4878 introducing a lengthy debate between the King of France and three of his leading advisers as to the position of a noble fugitive who has been warmly welcomed, kissed and embraced by a monarch, only for the monarch to discover that the fugitive's feudal overlord demands his immediate execution at that monarch's hand.

Heldris is intensely interested in and irritated by the social conditions of his time, giving vent to long tirades of scathing comment on contemporary decadence in high and low places. In these passages he interrupts his narrative to lament the passing of an earlier period of liberal patronage which brought more ample reward to the itinerant jongleur and in which, by a natural process of extension and rationalization, he imagined that virtue had been adequately rewarded and vice systematically punished. The poem starts in this strain 1–106 and Heldris returns to the same theme in 255–276 and 1562–76. He sees in himself a castigator of a period of moral decadence. This state of mind is typical of the poets who were writing in the third quarter of the thirteenth century. A comparable specimen is the short poem, possibly by Raoul de Houdenc, entitled *Li borjois Borjon*, which appears in the same omnibus manuscript and which I have published elsewhere.[44]

Medical matters interest Heldris considerably, witness the description of Eufemie's cure of the partially asphyxiated Cador in 612–22 and the details given of the pains of childbirth in 1775–88. He has what is surely a practical knowledge of bread-making 1808–34 and of the

[44] *Loc. cit.* in n. 26.

preparation of food over a camp fire 5924–85. Finally he is intimately acquainted with the life led by wandering jongleurs, in 2689–2986 describing the arrival of two eminently successful and more than average wealthy jongleurs at the court of the Count of Cornwall and their subsequent reception and activities at the fortified mansion of his seneschal; and in 3163–3654 their wanderings in Brittany, Burgundy and Gascony, their growing jealousy of the success of their apprentice, the more personal aspects of their nomadic existence, their financial circumstances and their petty quarrels and personal rivalries. What is more, the social criticism which he offers us so often is always written from the point of view of a wandering jongleur: the virtues he seeks in a nobleman, for example, are liberality, hospitality and a respect for artistic ability.

As happens so often when one examines a unique work by a mediaeval poet it is not easy to be precise about Heldris' literary knowledge. As I shall show later when I come to examine the sources of *Le roman de Silence* lines 5779 to 6706 are based textually upon an episode in *L'Estoire Merlin*. That section of the Arthurian prose-Vulgate is the only real literary source of the poem. On the other hand, literary allusions are not uncommon. Three passages which I have mentioned already show a fair knowledge of the Bible, as one would expect in a mediaeval author. In 5892 there is mention of *Les Quatre Fils Aymon*:

> . . . tres le tans al viel Aimon
> Ne cuit c'uns hom fust vis ne nés
> Ki por nient fust si penés. (5892–4).

When the two jongleurs are welcomed at the castle of the seneschal of the Count of Cornwall, they sing and play on the harp and the viele: the lais which they sing are those of *Gueron* and *Mabon*:

> Et quant cho vint apriés mengier
> De lor mestier ne font dangier.
> Li uns viiele un lai berton,
> Et li altres harpe Gueron.
> Puis font une altre atempreüre
> Et font des estrumens mesture.
> Si font ensanble un lai Mabon[45] . . . (2759–65).

The love of Queen Eufeme for Silence is inevitably compared with the love of Yseult and Tristan:

[45] Cp. the short note by Heinrich Gelzer in *Zeitsch. f. franz. Spr. und Litt.*, XLVII, 73–4 (1925).

Car onques Tristrans por Izelut,
Ne dame Izeuls por dant Tristran
N'ot tele angoisse ne ahan
Com eult Eufeme la roïne
Por le vallet ki ert meschine. (3700–4).

These brief references could be multiplied: they are mediaeval common-places which prove little.

Why in the first line of his poem does Heldris say that he is *de Cornuälle*? Certain passages of natural description, e.g. 2697–2717 and 2892–2906, may give the impression that he has personal knowledge of the woods, moors and rocky coasts of the Duchy; but of the thirty-two place-names which he uses only one is Cornish and that *Tintaguel* 2892, 4378, of which fortress he shows no special knowledge.[46] Is it with the house of Cornwall that he has personal ties, rather than with the land itself? *Renals li cuens* 1505, *Renalt de Cornuälle* 397, his only child *Eufemie*, his son-in-law *Cador*—a Cornishman for Geoffrey of Monmouth, but not necessarily so for Heldris—and his grand-daughter *Silence* all play leading parts in the poem; and quite often one senses in what Heldris has written a loyalty to the Earls of Cornwall themselves; but there is certainly nothing in *Le roman de Silence* to justify an attempt to see history behind the fiction,[47] as, for example, Rita Lejeune has done with such success for *Guillaume de Dôle* and A. du Chesne and Gaston Raynaud less happily for *La Chastelaine de Vergi*. Are we then looking on the wrong side of the Channel? Is the Cornuälle of Heldris in Finistère rather than in England? Here again the poet gives us no help: he describes the woods of Brittany in some detail, but of towns he mentions only *Nantes* 2936, of which he apparently knows little. Finally, is *Cornuälle* neither the Duchy of Cornwall nor the Cornouaille of Brittany but rather the little township of La Cornuaille (Maine-et-Loire) on the road from Candé to Ingrandes and some 50 kilometres only from Nantes itself?

As will be shown later a detailed study of the proper names and of the place-names used by Heldris reveals, among other things, a curious prominence given to three French knights, Hyebles de Castiel-Landon, Gui de Calmont and Rogiers de Bialmont.

[46] One might as well argue that Chrétien de Troyes was really a man of Sussex, *vide Cligès*, 2402, *A Sorlan monterent sor mer*, where Sorlan = Shoreham.

[47] Richard, son of King John of England, bore the title of Earl of Cornwall from 13 February 1225 until his death on 2 April 1272; and Edmund, son of Richard by his second wife Sanchia de Provence, bore it in his turn from his father's death until his own on 1 October 1300. Edmund and his wife, Margaret of Clare, had no children, and the title disappeared on Edmund's death. There is nothing in the lives of these folk to make us think of Renals, Eufemie, Cador or Silence.

[U]ns des Franchois, Gui de Calmont,
Et uns Rogiers nés de Bialmont,
Et Hyebles de Castiel Landon
Se lasscent chaïr a bandon. . . . (5557–60).

Beaumont and Chaumont are very common place-names in France, and there have been a number of noble families who have included them among their titles. There is only one Château-Landon. I can trace no knight of the name of Hyebles who was ever connected with Château-Landon either in history or literature, nor can I discover any other mention of a Gui de Calmont or a Rogier de Bialmont.

There remains the language. As I shall show in a later chapter the strong picard flavour of the poem seems to be from the north-west part of the territory in which the various forms of this dialect were spoken, and more precisely from somewhere in or near the triangle Tournai-Douai-Mons. In view of its gaps and the fact that it is in an anthology, the manuscript is clearly not an autograph of Heldris; and yet it is difficult to separate the language of the rhymes and the rhythm from that of the remainder of the lines. With or without its capricious orthography, we are, I think, not far away from what the poet originally wrote.

The date of composition is hard to determine. If lines 5779–6706 are a rather free adaptation of part of *L'Estoire Merlin*, which seems without doubt, then one can accept 1230, the approximate date of that prose work, as the *terminus a quo*. No other internal evidence is there to help us. As already stated,[48] the dates of composition of the other works contained in MS. Mi.LM.6 bring us down to 1267 or later, but this fact is useless if folios 188r° to 223r° once had a separate existence. Equally unreliable are the different views which have been expressed concerning the date of copying of the manuscript, running from "early thirteenth century" for the whole volume given by W. H. Stevenson to "certainement pas après la première décade du XIVe siècle" given for folios 337r° to 345v° by Charles Samaran. On the subject of the dating of *Le roman de Silence*, as a work of art or as a specimen of Old French language, there is, in effect, nothing to add to what I have written concerning the manuscript: we are probably in the second half of the thirteenth century, and nothing more precise can be said.

These few pages on the poet Heldris de Cornuälle contain little more than conjecture. If what I have written is accepted, then Heldris is established as a professional lay poet of the second half of the thirteenth century, who lived in all probability near to the

[48] *Vide supra*, p. 41.

present-day frontier between France and Belgium where Nord marches with Hainaut, but who had some connexion yet to be determined either with the Duchy of Cornwall or with Cornouaille or with the hamlet La Cornualle and who at the same time had some reason for featuring Château-Landon and Beaumont-en-Gâtinais in his poem. His artistic impulses are sound enough, as we shall see, even if the finished product is not without blemish. Parts of the Arthurian prose-Vulgate are well known to him, he can refer competently to the Bible and to well-known vernacular poems when he wishes, and his subject-matter implies a knowledge of the works of Wace and Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The Subject of the Poem

A brief digest of the subject-matter of *Le roman de Silence* has already been published by Heinrich Gelzer, the only writer who has ever given attention to the poem.[49] As that earlier publication is not easily accessible, a new résumé is given here.

Heldris de Cornuälle names himself and digresses upon public morality and the corrupting effect of wealth. (1–106).

Ebains, King of all England from Winchester to Durham, is waging war on Beghes, King of Norway. In an attempt to bring the war to an end King Beghes offers his daughter Eufeme to Ebains in marriage. Ebains has heard of the princess' beauty and immediately accepts the offer. Eufeme lands in England, her wedding is celebrated and there follow twelve months of festivity. (107–277).

Two counts are married to twin heiresses whose lands lie in Ebains' kingdom. The two counts quarrel over the inheritance of the twins and eventually they destroy each other in battle at Chester, despite the attempts at mediation made by Ebains. The King is furious at having lost two valuable supporters in so empty a quarrel and he passes a law that no woman shall inherit wealth or position in England as long as he holds the throne. (278–336).

Queen Eufeme is at Winchester. As Ebains nears the city on his way back from Chester, he encounters a dragon in the forest. He offers a countship and the free choice of a wife among eligible women to any man who can overcome the dragon. Among his retainers is a knight called Cador, who loves and is loved by Eufemie, the only child of Count Renalt de Cornuälle and one of Queen Eufeme's handmaidens. After a long prayer Cador kills the dragon and reappears before Ebains with its noisome head upon his lance. They all enter Winchester, where Ebains is welcomed by his queen and Cador by

[49] *Vide Zeitsch. f.r. Phil.*, XLVII (1927), pp. 87–99.

Eufemie, although these two last have never admitted their love for each other. (337–574).

That same night Cador wakes up in anguish, suffering from the effects of the venimous breath of the dragon. Ebains asks Eufemie, who is skilled in medicine, to nurse him, and he promises her the free choice of a husband should Cador recover. The two lovers, brought thus together in close proximity in conditions only too likely to accentuate their passion, become more and more enamoured of each other. Finally they each confess their love. They go off together to King Ebains to ask that he shall fulfil the promise that he has made to each of them. The King, who still doesn't understand that they love each other, consults his nobles, decides that it would be a good thing if Cador married Eufemie and by a special dispensation inherited the countship of Cornwall after the death of Renalt, and sends the Count of Chester to see if he can persuade them. They need little persuading, and Renalt de Cornuälle, who is equally delighted, comes to court to witness their marriage. (575–1576).

Cador and Eufemie live happily in Cornwall with Renalt and his countess. Renalt dies and Cador becomes Count of Cornwall. Eufemie finds that she is pregnant. If the child is a girl and if Eufemie has no other children, then by Ebains' law Cador's wealth and position will pass away from his direct descendants. It is arranged that the only person present at the birth shall be an aunt of Cador's, a widowed noblewoman who lost her own child soon after birth. Whether the newly-born child be a boy or a girl, this aunt shall announce publicly that it is a male heir. Nature moulds the unborn child in her most beautiful pattern and from her finest materials. The child is born. According to plan the aunt announces to Cador publicly that he is the father of a boy; but on enquiry Cador finds that the child is really a girl. The two parents decide to go on with the scheme which their discretion has made possible. The child is declared to be ailing, this in order to ensure that the priest will baptise it quickly and without removing its wrappings. It is given the name Silentius or Silence. (1577–2126).

Cador calls to him a certain seneschal, a relation of the dead Renalt, who has a son of his own. Between them the seneschal and the aunt agree to bring Silence up with the seneschal's son in the seclusion of a large house in the centre of a wood. (2126–2256).

Nature who has made Silence a beautiful girl and Environment who is to transform her into a lusty boy debate the situation and quarrel with each other. (2257–2358).

Silence is brought up as a boy and shows early skill both at her letters and in field sports. When she reaches adolescence, Cador

explains to her his reasons for having her brought up as a boy. Silence accepts the position, but in her twelfth year her mental conflict begins, Nature and Environment pulling her in different directions. As the years pass this conflict intensifies, Silence being worried especially by the practical issue that one day her true sex may be revealed and that then she will be completely unskilled at all womanly pursuits. (2359–2688).

One day two jongleurs who have acquired great wealth in their wanderings round England arrive in Cornwall to spend a period at Cador's court at Tintagel. When they leave they are even more heavily loaded with riches, but on their way to the coast they are benighted near the house where Silence is being brought up. They are given a lodging for the night and Silence waits on them. During the night Silence again debates her position and finally decides that here is an opportunity to learn one womanly art at least. She sees the jongleurs off the premises and then, having stained her face brown with nettle juice, she rides quickly to the coast and crosses to Brittany in the same boat as the jongleurs. The three land in Brittany and Silence rides to Nantes with the jongleurs without being recognized. She is eventually accepted as their assistant. (2689–2986).

Meanwhile in Cornwall the seneschal has to admit to Cador that Silence has disappeared. Cador and Eufemie are overcome with grief. After a great search they come to the conclusion that she has gone off with the jongleurs. Cador revenges himself by executing every jongleur who comes to Cornwall. (2986–3126).

Silence learns all that the two jongleurs have to teach her. Gradually in her travels with them in Gascony and Burgundy she comes to surpass them in playing and singing. The crisis comes at the court of the Duke of Burgundy, where Silence is preferred to her masters. They decide to kill her, but she overhears their plans, forces them to share their wealth with her and then stays behind alone in Burgundy. (3127–3476).

Finally, overcome with remorse at the grief which she must have caused her parents, Silence, now an accomplished and wealthy jongleur, returns to Cornwall, despite the ban against those of her profession. She arrives, reveals herself as a jongleur, and is in danger of being executed when Cador recognizes her by a birth-mark on her right shoulder. (3477–3682).

Silence, who is still accepted as the son and heir of the Count of Cornwall, is called to court by Ebains. Queen Eufeme immediately falls in love with her and, during the King's absence, does her utmost to persuade Silence to commit adultery with her. The mental conflict of the woman brought up as a man now becomes even more acute;

and the reaction of Silence to the advances of the Queen is one of acute repulsion. For as long as possible she avoids being alone a second time with Eufeme, but at length the impassioned Queen makes a further assault upon her. Silence again resists, and this time Eufeme take the traditional revenge of the rebuffed woman and announces to Ebains that Silence has attempted to seduce her. Ebains is a wise man. He keeps his temper and decides to send Silence to the court of the King of France with a letter asking that the young squire be suitably welcomed there. Eufeme, again following tradition, changes the letter for one demanding Silence's immediate execution. The King of France shows a wisdom as great as that of Ebains. He consults the Counts of Blois, Nevers and Clermont and decides to seek confirmation from Ebains before taking any action. Ebains' reply reveals the change of letters and the fact that he wishes Silence to be welcomed properly according to his high rank. Silence is a great success at the French court and before his eighteenth birthday is dubbed a knight by the King of France. Meanwhile, in England, Ebains' chancellor has revealed to him how the letters came to be changed by Eufeme. (3683–5185).

Ebains has trouble with his vassals, especially with the Count of Chester and two other rebellious noblemen. He is forced to recall Silence, now one of the leading knights of Christendom. Silence arrives with thirty French knights and plays a leading part in the discomfiture of the three rebels. (5186–5646).

Queen Eufeme makes one last attempt to persuade Silence to be her lover. She fails and again tells Ebains that Silence has tried to take advantage of her. (5647–5777).

Ebains and his queen plan their revenge. Eufeme reminds Ebains of how years ago King Fortigierne had built a tower with the help of Merlin, and of how Merlin had subsequently disappeared in the woods, announcing that only a woman could find him. Ebains is persuaded to tell Silence that she must find Merlin and not return until she has succeeded. Silence sets off sadly enough, convinced that she will never succeed. Six months later she meets a White-haired Man who reveals that he knows a wood where Merlin is living in the disguise of a Wild Man. Silence is to prepare a huge meal of salted meat, milk, honey and wine and then catch Merlin when he is replete with food. (5778–5992).

Nature and Environment argue as to whether Merlin shall revert to his natural habit of eating meat or continue his acquired one of living on herbs and roots. Each alleges in argument that the other was the cause of the downfall of Adam and Eve. (5993–6085).

Encouraged by Nature, Merlin eats the huge meal prepared for him and is duly captured by Silence, who to her desire to carry out Ebains' order adds a personal hatred for the magician in that it was he who enabled Uterpendragon to seduce the wife of Duke Gorlains of Cornwall. Silence and her captive set off for Ebains' court. On the way Merlin gives vent to four bursts of sardonic laughter—at a villein who has bought a new pair of boots; at a leper begging for alms; at a priest burying a child while its father laments; and finally at King Ebains, Queen Eufeme, Silence, himself and a nun in Eufeme's entourage. Ebains threatens to kill Merlin unless he will explain his laughter. Merlin laughed because the villein died before he reached home with his new shoes. He laughed at the leper and the other poor folk for begging for alms because immediately beneath their feet was hidden a huge treasure. He laughed at the putative father's grief on watching the burial of the child because the priest himself was really the child's father, for he had seduced the man's wife. Finally he laughed at Ebain's court because the nun is a man in disguise and the lover of the Queen and because Silence too is a woman in disguise, hence her success in capturing Merlin. (6086–6579).

Silence explains the secret of her life to Ebains. Queen Eufeme and the false nun are executed. Silence marries Ebains and becomes Queen of England. (6580–6704).

The Geographical and Historical Background

As the table of place-names will show Heldris mentions thirty-two localities in his poem. When orthographical variants are omitted these are, for England, *bos d'Ardane, Cestre, Cornuälle, Durame, Engleterre, Hantone, Londres, bos de Malroi, Tamise, Tintaguel* and *Wincestre*; and, for the continent, *Alemagne, Alvergne, Bertagne, Bialmont, Blois, Borgoigne, Calmont, Castiel Landon, Clermont, Espagne, France, Gascoigne, Jordan, Monmartre, Mont Loön, Nantes, Navers, Norouege, Paris, Rome* and *Saint Germain.*

From this list one can presumably remove *Engleterre, Alemagne, Espagne* and *France*, as being devoid of any specialist interest. *Rome* is mentioned once only and then in a well-known cliché; while *Jordan* is a common-place biblical reference. *Clermont, Blois* and *Navers* appear not so much as places but rather as the titles of counts; and *Calmont, Bialmont* and *Castiel Landon* are the surnames of French knights. Do the twenty place-names which remain, ten of them English and the remainder continental, give any indication of the personal experience of Heldris de Cornuälle?

To take the English names first, we learn that there is a township of *Cestre* (5669); that the battle there between Ebains and the four

disloyal counts is fought out on a plain flanked by a hill or mountain (5327–28), although in effect the country immediately around Chester is quite flat; and that the journey on horseback from Chester to Winchester takes four days only when made by armed knights (537), the distance being some 190 miles. *Cornuälle* is described in slightly greater detail. The journey on horseback by the aged Count Renalt from his castle at Tintagel to Ebains' court, presumably at Winchester, takes six days (1544), and the return journey by a party including a woman, another six days (1601), the distance again being approximately 190 miles; the Cornish countryside is wild and well-wooded (2154); and the county lies on the direct route southwards from Tintagel to Nantes in Brittany (2703), the house in which Silence is brought up being in fact an hour or so's riding with pack animals from Tintagel itself (2892), say, near Camelford, the sea-port used for Brittany being ten leagues farther south (2906), say, Fowey, and a crossing to the Breton coast at, say, Saint-Malo, being possible in fair weather between prime and mid-day (2903), i.e. in six hours. *Durame* is given as being at the opposite extremity of Ebains' lands from Winchester (114), *Hantone* as being *sor mer* (4885) and *Londres* as *de desos Tamise* for *desor* (4900). It is implied that *Tintagel* is the main seat of the Counts of Cornwall (2882) and Silence is referred to as *le vallet de Tintaguel* (4378). There are four references to *Wincestre*. As already stated it is at the opposite extremity of Ebains' realm from Durham and lies at a distance of four days' ride from Chester. It is there that Ebains imprisons his unfortunate chancellor (4981) and there that Eufeme awaits her spouse while he is away at the wars (341). We are given a brief description of the city site:

> Dont ert castials, or est cités,
> Forjies ja d'antiquités. (339–40).

Finally we are told that on the outskirts of the city are the *bos de Malroi* where Cador killed the dragon (559) and the *bos d'Ardane* of which he dreams (694). The name *Malroi* is appropriate enough, for presumably *mal* = evil, cp. *Malpas* (Cheshire); and *roi* < OE *rod* = *a clearing in a forest*, cp. *Oakroyd* (Yorkshire); but for all that it seems to be a made-up name. There are over seventy examples of *Ardene*, with various spellings, in Langlois' list[51] and another dozen of *Argone*, etc., one's mind going immediately to *le bois d'Argone* in Chrétien's *Yvain* 3228. Etymologically the word is clearly the same as Caesar's *silva Arduenna* and Shakespeare's *Forest of Arden*, but while we are obviously not in Belgium it would be a rash editor who claimed that we were in Gloucestershire!

[51] *Table des noms propres de toute nature compris dans les Chansons de geste imprimées*, E. Langlois, Paris, 1904.

Of the ten continental place-names which remain, the provinces *Bertagne, Alvergne, Borgoigne* and *Gascoigne*, given as those in which the runaway Silence wandered with her jongleur friends, seem to have been chosen the first as the obvious place of landing from Cornwall and the other three to cover as wide a sweep of France as possible. Heldris has no doubts that those sailing from Cornwall to France naturally land on the Breton coast (2703), or that a north wind is desirable to bring them there (2898). He seems to be under the impression that Burgundy and Gascony are fairly adjacent provinces, although lines 3215–16 may be taken as a succinct account of a very long journey. Presuming that they do land in Brittany about mid-day, which is one impossibility, as they left Silence's residence that same morning and had some thirty miles to travel before they took ship, the two jongleurs and Silence reach *Nantes* in time to spend the night there (2936), which is another impossibility. Of *Paris* Heldris knows that the French King's court is there (5107, 5135), that *Monmartre* is apparently a much-prized part of the city (4257, 4979) and that tourneys were held in the meadows by *Saint Germain* (5137). As happens very frequently in Old French literature, on one occasion at least the King of France holds court at *Mont Loön* (5265). Finally *Norouege* is a kingdom somewhere across the sea (199, etc.).

As this is fairly acceptable, if scanty and disappointing. One is reminded, say, of Philippe de Remi's vague mentions of Dover, London and Oxford in the romance of *Jehan et Blonde*. There is certainly nothing similar to the description in that same poem of the journeys between Boulogne, Montreuil-sur-Mer, Hesdin, Corbie, Clermont and Dammartin, which journeys Philippe had obviously made himself; still less is there evidence of topographical knowledge comparable with that of Fresnes-les-Montauban and Gavrelles in Jehan Bodel's *Jeu de Saint Nicolas*. For the most part the localities mentioned by Heldris are ones which occur frequently in Arthurian texts. Of the thirty-two listed above no fewer than seventeen are found in the Arthurian prose-Vulgate, viz. *Cornouaille, Engleterre, Londres, Tamise, Tintaiel, Wincestre* and *Alemaigne, Auvergne, Bertaigne, Biaumont, Bourgoigne, Espaigne, France, Jordan, Nantes, Norvegue, Rome*,[52] all of these seventeen being listed a second time by Langlois[53] as appearing in various chansons-de-geste, except *Tintaguel*, a place of obvious Arthurian predeliction. A close examination of Langlois' list shows that he had also culled from his epics another twelve of Heldris' place-names, in short, that only four of the thirty-two fail

[52] *The Vulgate version of the Arthurian Romances, Index of Names and Places*, H. O. Sommer, Washington, 1916.
[53] *Op. cit.* in n. 51.

to appear there, viz. *bos de Malroi, Cestre, Durame* and *Tintaguel.* A third confrontation, this time with the places mentioned by Chrétien de Troyes in his five Arthurian poems, shows that Chrétien has sixteen of Heldris' thirty-two, lacking *Durame, bos de Malroi, Alvergne, Bialmont, Blois, Borgoigne, Calmont, Castiel Landon, Clermont, Jordan, Monmartre, Mont Loön, Navers, Norouege, Paris* and *Saint Germain.*

Forty-eight proper names are used in the poem. Of these nine are Biblical characters, viz. *Adams, Eve, Joseph, Longin, Sainte Marie, Saint Pere, rois Pharaöns, Sathanas* and *le Virgine.* With these can be counted *Sains Amans, Sainte Paciensce* and *Saint Juliien.* Six names of nationality, viz. *Englois, Escos, Franchois, Irois, Judeu* and *Norois* need no comment, nor does the anonymous *rois de France. Aimon, roi Alixandre, Artus, Fortigierne, Izeuls, Merlin, Tristran* and *Uterpandragon* are for Heldris literary rather than historical figures, while *Gueron* and *Mabon* are the titles of lais. *Silence* is the name of the fictitious heroine and *Malduis* a pseudonym which she assumes. *Ades* is a minor attendant at Ebains' court who appears once only, *Galtier* the dead child of Silence's foster-mother and *Ris* a king whose name results in all probability from a misreading by Heldris of one of his sources.[54] We are thus left with fourteen possibly historical names: *li rois Bege, le cuens de Blois, Cador li cuens de Cornuälle,* the knight *Gui de Calmont, li cuens de Cestre, li cuens de Clermont, li rois Ebains, Eufeme, Eufemie, Gorlains li dus de Cornuälle,* the knight *Hyebles de Castiel Landon, li cuens de Naviers, li cuens Renals de Cornuälle* and the knight *Rogiers de Bialmont.*

All of these personages are presented to us as contemporaries of Silence, with the sole exception of Gorlains, who is a clear literary inheritance from the Arthurian story of Uterpendragon's seduction of Igerne; that is from the *Historia Regum Britanniae*[55] of Geoffrey of Monmouth, VIII, 18–19, where he is called *Gorlois, dux Cornubie*; the *Brut*[56] of Wace, 8461–8822, where he appears as *li cuens de Cornoaille* (8572), having earlier been given his christian name *Gorlois, li cuens de Cornoaile* (7807); or *L'Estoire Merlin,*[57] pp. 58–76, where he is called *li dus de Tintaiel,* p. 58 *et passim.* This Gorlois has no claim to be a historical personage; and it is in Geoffrey of Monmouth that his legend appears for the first time.[58]

[54] Cp. n. 74.

[55] *The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth. . .* ed. by A. Griscom, London and New York, 1929.

[56] *Le roman de Brut,* ed. by Ivor Arnold, S.A.T.F., Paris, 1938–40, 2 vols.

[57] *The Vulgate version of the Arthurian Romances,* vol. II, *L'Estoire de Merlin,* ed. by H. O. Sommer, Washington, 1908.

[58] *Vide,* e.g., J. S. P. Tatlock, *The legendary history of Britain,* Univ. of California Press, 1950, where the author writes of the "almost complete absence of these personages, Uther, Gorlois and Igerna, from the pre-Geoffrey tradition. . . .", p. 315.

Heldris presents to us three royal personages: *Ebains*, who was once King of England

De Wincestre trosqu'a Durame (114);

his contemporary *Beghes*,

Ki tint la tiere de Norwege (146);

and *Eufeme*, a Norwegian princess who became Queen of England by her marriage to Ebains. It is possible to see in the name *Ebains* a form of *Evain*, *Owain* or *Yvain*; while King *Evrains* plays a considerable rôle in Chrétien's *Erec et Enide*. In 145 and 228 the word *Bege* rhymes with *Norwege*, while the scribe writes *Beghe* and *Beghes* in 165 and 173; and *Eufeme* is written *Enfeme* in 165 and 229. But none of this helps us: England has never had a king called *Ebains* or a queen *Eufeme*, and no Norwegian king has been called *Beghes*.

As members of the noble family of Cornwall we meet *Renals li cuens* 1505 or *Renalt de Cornuälle* 397; his only daughter *Eufemie*; his son-in-law *Cador*, who before his marriage had no connexion with the duchy; and *Silence*, the only child of Cador and Eufemie, who became by marriage Queen of England. Once more this family has nothing historical about it. As is well known, the literary character Cador de Cornouaille played a far from insignificant rôle in Arthurian tradition from the *Historia Regum Britanniae* onwards; and the Duchy of Cornwall had its place in the Arthurian legends even before the time of Geoffrey.[59] The possibility of some connexion with the thirteenth-century house of Cornwall has been discussed already[60]; but it seems to remain incontestable that neither Renals, nor Eufemie, nor Cador, nor Silence has any claim to be historical.

There appears at the English court a *cuens de Cestre* 1309, the trusted counsellor of King Ebains; and similarly we meet at the French court the Counts of *Blois*, *Clermont* and *Naviers* who help the anonymous king; but these are simple titles rather than living people. Finally, when Silence returns to England to help the King against the four rebel knights of Chester, there are thirty French noblemen in his retinue. As we have seen, three of them are named and that most precisely.[61] Here at least Heldris would seem to be parading before us real men of flesh and bone, members of well-known French families, warriors who have christian names as well as geographical ones. It is, alas, a deception. There never was a *Hyebles* in the families who held Château-Landon; there was no *Rogiers* among the robber-knights of nearby Beaumont-en-Gâtinais; and whichever of the many Beaumonts and Chaumonts are intended, the true history,

[59] *Vide* J. S. P. Tatlock, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–61.
[60] *Vide supra*, n. 47.
[61] *Vide supra*, 5557–60, quoted on p. 47.

if any there is, behind *Hyebles*, *Rogiers* and *Gui* remains hidden from us.

It would have been an agreeable exercise to have done for the characters and for the places of *Le roman de Silence* what Rita Lejeune did so brilliantly for *Guillaume de Dôle*; but we are here in a literary world, inhabited by men and women of phantasy.

The Sources

As the authors of mediaeval romances so often do, Heldris de Cornuälle makes frequent allusions to his pretended source. According to him he is translating into French a Latin poem:

> Si com l'estorie le nos livre
> Qu'en latin escrite lizons,
> En romans si le vos disons. (1660–62).

Elsewhere he is less precise over the language of his model, but he still insists that he is adapting an *estorie* or else an *escriture*:

> Si est li voirs, cho dist l'estorie
> Ki de Silence fait memorie. (2657–58);

and again:

> Oiés mervellose aventure
> Si con nos conte l'escriture. (2689–90);

and a third time:

> Cho dist l'estorie u jo le truis. (6678).

In his use of this source he takes all the liberties necessary:

> Jo ne di pas que n'i ajoigne
> Avoic le voir sovent mençoigne
> Por le conte miols acesmer:
> Mais se jel puis a droit esmer
> N'i metrai rien qui m'uevre enpire,
> Ne del voir nen iert mos a dire,
> Car la verté ne doi taisir. (1663–69).

Heldris never names his source, and he tells us nothing which would help us to name it in our turn. Despite his repeated protestations, one suspects that it existed only in his imagination. In any case the search for the literary sources of *Le roman de Silence* must be based upon something more firm than these vague protestations of its author.

If the synopsis of the story given on pages 48–52 is examined closely, it will be seen that the narrative of the poem falls readily into nine sections:

(i) King Ebains and his war with Norway. (107–277).

(ii) The story of the two counts. (278–336).

(iii) Cador's adventure with the dragon and his marriage to Eufemie. (337–1576).

(iv) The birth and upbringing of Silence. (1577–2256, 2359–2688).

(v) Silence with the jongleurs. (2689–2986, 3127–3682).

(vi) Queen Eufeme's attempted seduction of Silence. (3683–4379, 5647–5777).

(vii) Silence at the French court. (4380–5185).

(viii) Silence's victory over the three rebellious counts. (5186–5646).

(ix) The search for Merlin, his bursts of sardonic laughter and the solution of the drama. (5778–6704).

As already hinted,[62] the clue to the main source from which Heldris drew his inspiration is contained in the last of these nine sections; and to understand his method of composition one must work backwards instead of forwards. The search for Merlin, which forms the final adventure undertaken by Silence, is in essence a re-writing of the story of Grisandoles the Seneschal of Rome, herself a German princess Avenable in disguise, as we find it narrated in that section of the Arthurian prose-Vulgate which is called *L'Estoire Merlin*.[63] Heldris has abridged the original story, and he has replaced Merlin the Stag by Merlin the White-haired Man, but the two narratives remain very similar. Each story starts with a vision experienced by a certain ruler, Julius Caesar in the one case, Ebains in the other, which vision results in the setting out of a warrior to seek the lost magician Merlin. In each story the warrior is a woman in disguise, and in each she is given advice by a mysterious helper, the Giant Stag or the White-haired Man, both of them secondary manifestations of Merlin himself, who thus encompasses his own downfall. The huge meals eaten by the magician in his true form are identical in the two stories, as is also his subsequent capture, except that Silence works alone, while Grisandoles needs the help of a boy and four men. In each story Merlin bursts into sardonic laughter at a number of things which he sees as he is led away as a captive, and in each it is his own explanation of this laughter which rounds off the narrative. In *L'Estoire Merlin* the Empress and her twelve lovers are then burnt alive, while in *Le roman de Silence* Queen Eufeme is drawn by four horses and her single lover is killed. Finally, in *L'Estoire Merlin*, Grisandoles, become once more Avenable, is married to Julius Caesar, while in *Le roman de Silence* Ebains makes Silence his second queen. A textual comparison of the two stories shows that, while Heldris uses much of

[62] *Vide* p. 41.
[63] *Ed. cit.* in n. 57, pp. 281–92.

the minor detail of *L'Estoire Merlin*, he does not follow his original slavishly. Lines 5778–6704 of the poem are far from being merely a rhymed version of the Vulgate prose text. Nevertheless, in so far as the Grisandoles story itself appears nowhere else but in *L'Estoire Merlin*, and as the two narratives of Grisandoles and Silence bear a close similarity to each other, there can be no doubt that Heldris based his final episode upon pages 281–292 of *L'Estoire Merlin* as printed by Sommer.

There are, however, three passages in the ninth episode of *Le roman de Silence*, which, while far from being original in content, were nevertheless not derived from the Grisandoles story in *L'Estoire Merlin*:

(i) Queen Eufeme opens the ninth episode by telling her husband the tale of King Fortigierne and his tower, of the help given to Fortigierne by the child Merlin and of the prophecy made by Merlin as he disappears that only a woman shall find him again. (5779–5803).

(ii) When Silence captures the magician, she explains her enmity towards him by referring to how, thanks to Merlin's wiles, Uterpendragon, King of Britain, was enabled to spend a night with Igerne, the wife of Silence's ancestor Gorlains, Duke of Cornwall, Arthur being born as a result, and Gorlains being subsequently killed. (6144–6158).

(iii) Thirdly, there are discrepancies between the two texts as to the causes of Merlin's laughter. In *L'Estoire Merlin* the magician laughs four times: at Grisandoles the Seneschal; at a group of beggars seeking alms outside an abbey; at a squire who strikes his master three times while he is hearing mass in a chapel; and at the libidinous Empress of Rome and her twelve attendants. In *Le roman de Silence* Merlin again laughs four times: at a villein who has just purchased a pair of new shoes (6191–6201); at a group of beggars seeking alms outside an abbey (6202–6209); at the burial of a boy by a priest and at the grief of the boy's supposed father (6210–6221); and at King Ebains (6228), at Silence (6241), at the man disguised as a nun who attends the Queen (6252) and at the Queen herself (6276).

The story of Fortigierne's tower appears in full detail in *L'Estoire Merlin*,[64] as the setting for Merlin's laughter at the villein's shoes and the boy's burial. It is given in identical connexion with these same two bursts of laughter in the anonymous prose text called the

[64] *Ed. cit.* in n. 57, pp. 23–35.

Huth Merlin.[65] As the first part of the *Huth Merlin* is accepted as a *version dérimée* of Robert de Boron's lost verse *Merlin*,[66] which poem may well have been extant in its entirety when Heldris was writing, that poem may be listed as a third possible source. The story can be traced back still farther, for it is given in Wace's *Brut*,[67] the *Brut* being the general source-book of *L'Estoire Merlin*, of Robert de Boron, and, *a fortiori*, of the extant prose rendering of Robert de Boron; and it appears yet earlier in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*,[68] the main source of the *Brut*. That Heldris knew *L'Estoire Merlin* has been shown. Could he have got all the details which he provides on Fortigierne's tower from *L'Estoire Merlin*? In effect, it is possible to reconstruct 5784–5803 of *Le roman de Silence* almost entirely from *L'Estoire Merlin*.[69] Heldris leaves out an immense amount. What he adds is the name *Fortigierne* in that form; the fact that it was in the night that the work of the masons came tumbling down; the statement that Merlin, *nés sans pere*, was indeed *fil al diable*; and the briefly-expressed link which he needs between the story of Fortigierne's tower and Silence's quest, i.e. the statement that Merlin took to the woods immediately and that he prophesied there and then that only a woman could find him. In our attempt to trace the source of these small additions the *Huth Merlin* gives us no help. Wace's *Brut*, on the contrary, while it has *Vortiger*, 7309 etc., provides the lines:

> Mais quanqu'il unt le jur uvré
> Est la nuit en terre afundré. (7333–34),

and gives a long description of the incubus who was Merlin's father (7439–56). Wace does not help us with the linking passage. Geoffrey has *Vortegirnus* (VI, 16, etc.), *set quicquid una die operabantur absorbebat*

[65] *Merlin, roman en prose du XIIIe siècle, publié avec la mise en prose du poème de Merlin de Robert de Boron . . .*, ed. by Gaston Paris and J. Ulrich, S.A.T.F., Paris, 2 vols., 1886. *Vide* vol. I, pp. 38–61.

[66] The 502 extant lines of this poem were published by W. A. Nitze as part of the *notes critiques* of his edition of *Le roman de L'Estoire dou Graal* by Robert de Boron, C.F.M.A., Paris, 1927, pp. 126–30.

[67] *Ed. cit.* in n. 56, lines 7309–7584.

[68] *Ed. cit.* in n. 55, Bk. VI, chaps. 17–19.

[69] *Ed. cit.* in n. 57, pp. 23–5, 33, 283, 289. I have punctuated Sommer's text and lengthened the abbreviations. "Lors fist [Vertiger] mander tous ses maistres machons et fist venir le cauch et le mortier, si fist commencier cele tor (p. 23, lines 12–14). . . . Et quant il l'orent ouvré .iij. toises ou .iiij. desus terre en haut si rechai tout jus, et ensi rechai .iij. fois ou .iiij. (p. 23, lines 14–15) . . . cele tor ne puet tenir ne ja ne tenra, se el mortier del fondement n'a mis del sanc de cel enfant qui est nés sans pere (p. 24, lines 40–42) . . . cis est nés sans pere et est del eage de .vij. ans (p. 25, lines 18–19) . . . ne onques point de pere n'ot (p. 25, lines 40–41). . . . Et Merlins dist a Vertiger: "Ore pues faire ta tor si grans comme tu vaudras (p. 33, lines 25–26) . . . ne ja la savras si grant faire qu'ele mais chiece" (p. 33, line 26). . . . Li homs salvages [dist:"] (p. 283, line 21) . . . feme m'avoit pris par sa poisance et par son engin, che que nus homs ne pooit faire de tout vostre pooir["] (p. 289, lines 14–15).

tellus in altera (VI, 17), and the story of the *incubos demones* (VI, 18), but he lacks the linking passage.

Silence gives a brief résumé of Uterpendragon's seduction of Igerne in 6144–57. *L'Estoire Merlin*[70] describes the event in full detail, naming the countess as *Ygerne*, calling her husband simply *li dus de Tintaiel*, adding *Ulfin* as the name not of a seneschal but of *.j. sien consellier* (i.e. of Uterpendragon), and saying that the duke was killed in battle on the very night of the King's imposture, this being one of the mysterious essentials of the story. In the *Huth Merlin*,[71] the countess is again *Ygerne*, her husband *li dus de Teintaguel* and Uterpendragon again has *un sien consillier* called *Urfin*; and once more the duke is killed in battle on the night of the outrage. In both the *Brut*[72] and in Geoffrey of Monmouth[73] *Ygerne* and *Ulfin* are named, Ulfin is not seneschal and the duke is duly killed on the night in question, but while in the *Brut* this last bears the name of *li cuens de Cornoaille* in Geoffrey alone he is given his full title of *Gorlois, dux Cornubie*.

As we have seen on p. 52, while Merlin laughs four times in *Le roman de Silence*, at the villein's shoes, at the beggars seeking alms, at the boy's burial[74] and at the imposters, only two of these reasons for sardonic hilarity appear in the comparable place in *L'Estoire Merlin*. The two others are in *L'Estoire Merlin*, but in another context, as part of the story of Fortigierne's tower. In short, Heldris has used four of the six bursts of laughter described by the anonymous author of *L'Estoire Merlin*, omitting the episode of the squire and the knight, and joining Silence herself to the other imposters.

In this examination of the possible literary sources of *Le roman de Silence*, the Merlin episode has been examined first and in such detail

[70] *Ed. cit.* in n. 57, pp. 58–76.

[71] *Ed. cit.* in n. 64, pp. 98–126.

[72] *Ed. cit.* in n. 56, pp. 8461–8822.

[73] VIII, 18–20.

[74] Here as elsewhere Heldris permits himself great liberties with his source, always assuming that *L'Estoire Merlin* is his direct inspiration. He leaves out many details, e.g. the messengers who question the mother of the dead boy, certain details of the dying villein, and the fact that the villein was planning to go on a pilgrimage. He adds the cemetery and the two stones between which the boy is buried, and above all he invents the mysterious lines:

> Un roi i ot qu'ot a non Ris.
> Cil ne li pot ainc tant proier,
> Si tangoner, ne si broier
> Que l'oquoisons li fist gehir. (6198–6201).

Without any doubt these lines come from a misreading of some source material, comparable with the misunderstanding of Geoffrey of Monmouth which gave Robert de Boron *Moine*, *Uter* and *Pendragon* as the three sons of Constant (*op. cit.* in my note 65, vol. I, p. x); but unfortunately they have not helped me to find the immediate source which Heldris was using.

because it appears probable that Heldris himself drew his first inspiration from this episode. The story of Grisandoles in the Arthurian prose-Vulgate was probably his point of departure: he composed lines 1–5647 of his poem to lead up to and to explain this final episode. His ambition was to write the *Enfances Grisandoles-Silence* just as other poets had set out to write the *Enfances Roland* or the *Enfances Vivien*. It follows that the earlier sections of his poem, far from original no doubt in their minor details, are nevertheless well assimilated and well digested in their broad outlines. One must not expect to find true textual parallels for these earlier sections; although the Arthurian texts which provided the final episode were also able to offer the general atmosphere and the background of the remainder of the poem.

In the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the first in date of the sources so far examined, Geoffrey of Monmouth describes for us the state of war which once existed between England and Norway. Arthur himself succeeded in seizing this kingdom from the hands of Riculfus,[75] and Malgo seized it a second time,[76] but nowhere in the accounts of these wars does one find the names of Beghes, Eufeme or Ebains. Cador, Duke of Cornwall, appears frequently in Books IX, X and XI of Geoffrey's *Historia*. It is he who conquers the Saxon warrior Baldulfus, but after this defeat the latter escapes disguised as a wandering jongleur, exactly as Silence escapes from the house of the seneschal.[77] Guinevere, the future wife of Arthur, was, according to Geoffrey, *in thalamo Cadoris ducis educta*.[78] Finally, it is in the very battle in which Arthur receives his mortal wound that Cador himself dies,[79] and it is his son who replaces Arthur as king. The theme of the husband of an only daughter who soon inherits the lands and titles of his noble father-in-law is that of Brennius, who marries the heiress of Segin, leader of the Allobroges.[80] The story of a dragon, which Heldris uses to give Cador an excuse for asking for the hand of Eufemie, is given four times in the *Historia*, the most important occasion being that of the construction of Fortigierne's tower.[81]

Norway is often mentioned in Wace's *Brut*. Before marrying the daughter of Duke Seguin, Brennes flees from his brother Belin and takes refuge with Elfinges, King of Norway, and there marries a Norwegian princess.[82] It is to Norway that Octave flees to seek

[75] *Historia Regum Britanniae*, IX, 11.
[76] *Ibid.*, XI, 7.
[77] *Ibid.*, IX, 1.
[78] *Ibid.*, IX, 9.
[79] *Ibid.*, XI, 2.
[80] *Ibid.*, III, 6.
[81] *Ibid.*, VI, 19.
[82] *Brut, ed. cit.* in n. 56, 2411.

help against Trahern at the court of King Compert.[83] Wace describes to us in detail the story of Loth, placed by Arthur on the throne of Norway after Sichelins had died without an heir, passing then to Riculf, who tried to expel Loth.[84] Cador, Count of Cornwall, appears in the *Brut* as the conqueror of Balduf,[85] and as the man who pursued and killed Cheldric, another Saxon chieftain, near Toteneis, by the river Teigne and beneath the hill Teignevic.[86] For Wace, as for Geoffrey, it is Cador who brings up Guinevere, the future wife of Arthur:

> . . . Genuevre prist, sin fist reïne,
> Une cuinte e noble meschine;
> Bele esteit e curteise e gente,
> E as nobles Romains parente;
> Cador la nurri richement
> En Cornoaille lungement,
> Cume sa cusine prochainne;
> E sa mere resteit romaine.[87]

The 502 lines which remain of Robert de Boron's verse *Merlin* have nothing to do with the subject of *Le roman de Silence*. Similarly, when the passages already discussed are put on one side, neither the prose redaction of Robert de Boron, nor the *Huth Merlin* has anything relevant to offer us. There remains *L'Estoire Merlin*, from which so much has already been culled. We have seen that twenty of the forty-eight proper-names and seventeen of the thirty-two place-names in *Le roman de Silence* are also in the Arthurian prose-Vulgate. Ten of these proper names and sixteen of these place-names are in *L'Estoire Merlin*. Of the ten proper names, once *Artus*, *Merlin* and *Uterpandragon* are put on one side, only *Cador* seems to link the two narratives in any way at all. In *L'Estoire Merlin*, Cador, helped by Bretel, Bedoiers and Richier, guards the Roman prisoners after the great battle against the Emperor Luces: *si ot Cador en sa compaignie cels de Cornewaille*.[88] In short, the link of proper names is useless. Equally feeble is that of place-names. The case of *Cornuälle*, *Tintaiel* and *Wincestre* has already been examined. *Biaumont* is the native city of a youth *Aces*, which city is mentioned three times in *L'Estoire Merlin*.[89] One learns in the same text that, at a certain moment, *toute la premiere cité que li baron garnirent ce fu Nantes en Bertaigne*

[83] *Ibid.*, 5778.
[84] *Ibid.*, 9799, *et sequ.*
[85] *Ibid.*, 9077, *et sequ.*
[86] *Ibid.*, 9389, *et sequ.*
[87] *Ibid.*, 9645–52.
[88] *L'Estoire Merlin*, *ed. cit.* in n. 57, p. 436.
[89] *Ibid.*, pp. 194–6, 254, 320.

par devers Cornevalle[90]; and elsewhere, in a passage taken from MS. Bibl. Nat. f.fr. 9123, there is mention of a certain *roy de Norvaga.*[91] Neither in its broad narrative content nor in its minor detail can *L'Estoire Merlin* be the source used by Heldris for 1–5778. Lines 5779–6709 have as their inspiration a series of passages taken from *L'Estoire Merlin*, together with some small details taken either from the *Historia Regum Britanniae* or from the *Brut.* As for the events described in 1–5778, Heldris took them from his own imagination,[92] but his imagination was inspired in some measure by the romantic historians Geoffrey of Monmouth and Robert Wace. There is little to help us choose between the two, but W. H. Stevenson was probably right when he said that the romance was "evidently based upon Geoffrey of Monmouth."[93]

The Language

In a recent book,[94] C. T. Gossen published a clear and systematic analysis of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the various forms of mediaeval picard. I accept his system and in the paragraphs which follow I examine the language of *Le roman de Silence* under the headings which he has suggested, giving due attention to the non-picard forms and distinguishing those in the rhyme-words from those in the body of the lines.

(i) TONIC VOWELS

§ 1. Tonic free A > pic. *e, ei.*

When a few rare exceptions are set aside, tonic free A > *e*, as in francien. -ARE > *-er*, e.g. *trover* 15, 17, 18, etc., *esprover* 23, *rover* 27, *doner* 43. -ATU(M) > *-é*, e.g. *torné* 45, *gré* 135, *colpé* 152. PATRE(M) > *pere*, e.g. 24, 1299, 1585, etc. TALE(M) > *tel*, e.g. 117, 592, 834, etc., but *Cornuälle : talle* 1–2. MALU(M) > *mel : sel* 1113–14, 2105–6, etc., as a tonic form, or *mal*, e.g. 1776, 2104, *mal : val* 3421–22, the choice being arbitrary, e.g.

> Vos diols ne fait ne *mal* ne bien.
> N'avra por cho ne bien ne *mel.* (*: sel*) 2104–5.

[90] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[91] *Ibid.*, p. 125, n. 2.
[92] In this enquiry I have deliberately avoided the search for vague analogues which fills so large a place in literary criticism as it is applied to works of the French Middle Ages. So much of mediaeval literature is in absolute essence a repeated statement and re-statement of certain folk-lore themes, which can be traced, usually fruitlessly, across the map of Europe and Asia—the Amazon knight, Potiphar's wife, the substituted letter, birth-marks, the man disguised as a woman, la princesse lointaine, the incubus, the incuba, the incubum. Needless to say, they are nearly all in *Le roman de Silence.*
[93] *Loc. cit.* in n. 2, p. 224.
[94] *Petite grammaire de l'ancien picard*, Paris, 1951.

On the other hand STATU(M) > *estei* 1878, but cp. *esté : esté* < AESTATE(M) 3165–66, etc.

§ 2. -AVU(M), -AUCU(M), -AUCA(M) > pic. *-au, -eu.*

The form *-oi* is found nearly everywhere, e.g. *poi* 493, 574, 1038, etc., *poi : moi* 5759–60, *bloie* 1907, *poie : joie* 1611–12. On the contrary *peu : preu* 3065–66. CLAVU(M) > *cleu : desneu* (*pr. ind.* 1 of *tr. v. desnuer*) 6367–68.

§ 3. *-ar-* for *-er-* before a consonant, and vice versa.

This hesitation hardly exists, either in tonic syllables, e.g. *arge* 5, *esparge* 6, *carcre* 116, *ert* < ERAT 393, 396, 397, etc., *certes* 312, *clerc* 273, or in the pretonic syllables, e.g. *atargiés : cargiés* 191–2, *acoärdi : hardi* 649–50, *clergié* 194, *serpens* 346, 353, 357, etc., *aperçoit* 407, 567, etc. The forms *daärains* 3373, *daërrain* 5442 are found side by side with *derriänment* 134; and *pert* 2974, 2975, 5388 < PARET side by side with *pert* 5501, 5502, 5627, etc., < PERDIT. See also *cargié : marcié* < MERCATU(M) 4949–50, *marchié : encargié* 6317–18.

§ 4. A + *l* before a consonant > pic. *au*, as in francien. (Cp. § 58.)

There is little doubt that *l* was vocalized in the group A + *l* + consonant through the whole of the north of France long before the date of composition of *Le roman de Silence.* It nevertheless remains true that the scribe writes *l* more often than *u*, e.g. *valt* 48, 97, 224, etc.; *vials* 49, 817, 829; *maltalens* 75, *maltalent* 2274, 2347, etc.; *altres* 286, 419, *altresi* 458, etc.; *bials* 427, 433, 451, etc.; but on the contrary *haus* 459, *caut* 275, *saut* 477, etc. This is clearly a matter of orthographical preference.

§ 5. -ALIS, TALIS, QUALIS.

As we shall see in § 58, *l* never drops in the group A + *l* + consonant. No doubt *l* vocalizes in this position, but the scribe prefers to write *l* rather than *u*. TALIS > *tels* 269, 445, 2356, etc., TALES > *tels* 6, 1542, 1650, etc., QUALIS > *quels* 1801, *liquels* 1797, 4205, 5142, etc. Words in -ALIS fall into two groups, the former of which is picard: *droitureus : natureus* 2553–54, *menestreus* 26, *menestrels : tels* 2691–92, *ostels* 2223; and on the contrary *loials : roials* 1303–4, 6629–30, *naturals* 2305, *amirals* 5610.

§ 6. A + Latin or Gallo-Roman yod > pic. *ai*, as in francien.

There are few exceptions to this rule. MAGIS > *mais* 27, 50, 71, etc.; FACIT > *fait* 59, 199, 201, etc.; FACERE > *faire : retraire*

131–2, *faire : repaire* 335–6, *faire : traire* 1279–80; MAGISTRE(M) > *maistres* (sg.) 1, *maistre : palaistre* 2493–4, *maistre* 2710, 6684, *maistres* (pl.) 2756, 3142, 3166; BASIARE > *baisier* 1059, 1099, 1118, etc. Cp., however, *fasoit* 2146, *miestre : estre* 453–4, 4111–2, *baze* 3689, *basié* 4686, *bazier* 1054, *plasir : taisir* 6309–10, 6397–8, yet *taisir : plaisir* 6627–8.

§ 7. -ATICU(M) > pic. *-age, -aige.*

The scribe always writes *-age*, e.g. *mariäge : sage* 161–2, 999–1000; *halsage : mariäge* 565–6; *vasselage : malage* 785–6; *rage : parage* 861–2; *sage : corage* 963–4; *mariäge : malage* 1073–4, etc.

§ 8. Yod + ATA > pic. *-ie*, francien *-iée.*

The picard forms are very numerous: *esloignie : puignie* 41–42; *gorgie : forgie* 83–84; *enpirie* 257; *cangie* 259; *abascie : lascie* 261–2; *forjies* 340; *esmarie* 504; *castie : bastie* 845–6, 957–8, 6445–6; *corocie* 1836; *estuïe : anuïe* 1877–8; *acolcie : tocie* 2005–6; *noïe* 3075; *malhaitie : afaitie* 3713–4; *baisie* 3770; *negie : asegie* 3793–4; *vengie : engie* 3973–4; *losengie : vengie* 4093–4, 4259–60; *ensegnie* 4116; *blecie : depecie* 4135–6, etc. Cst. *affiëe : menee* 1509–10.

§ 9. DEUS, -(A)EUS.

With the single exception of *Judeu* 436, 472, *Le roman de Silence* has no proper names in -(A)EUS. DEUS > *Dex* 186, 256, 355, etc., but *Deux* 2033; DEU(M) > *Deu* 419, 462, 471, etc., but *Dé : esgardé* 167–8. *LEGUA(M) > *liue* 1111, *liues* 2875, 2906, *liues : triues* 3787–8. TREGUA(M) > *triues : liues* 3787–8, *juër : atriuër* 5639–40.

§ 10. Tonic free open E > pic. *ie*, as in francien, this being sometimes reduced to *i*.

PEDE(M) > *pié* 152, 288, 2229, etc.; BREVE(M) > *brief* 1524, 4298, 4301, etc., *brief : fief* 4291–2; QUAERAT > *quiert* 1366, 1582, etc.; *PETTYA(M) > *piece* 185, 3415, *pieces* 699. MANERIA(M) > *maniere* 2490, *maniere : ciere* 3029–30, *manieres* 250, 618. MATERIA(M) > *matere* 1865, 1872, 1877, etc., *materre* 1874, but *matyre : dire* 275–6, 2343–4, 2355–6, *matyre : majestyre* 1827–8.

§ 11. Tonic blocked open E > pic. *e, ie.*

The two forms exist side by side in *Le roman de Silence*, but *ie* seems more common in tonic syllables, e.g. *terre* 49, *terre : guerre* 175–6, *terre : quere* 557–8, but *tiere* 146, *Engletiere : terre* 107–8, *Engletiere : guerre* 147–8, *Engletiere* 237, *Engletiere : tiere* 277–8, 315–6,

etc.; *estre* 212, 942, *estre : miestre* 453–4, *estre : priestre* 6361–2; *estre : destre* 1089–90, *estres : fenestres* 619–20, but *iestre* 100, 759; *apriés* 247, 361, 369, etc., *priés* 157, 160, etc.; *bele* 401, 1018, 1237, etc., but *biele* 166, 1015, 1501, etc.; *guerre* 212, *guerre : terre* 175–6, *guerre : Engletiere* 147–8; *noviel* 1716, *noviele : puciele* 197–8, *noviele* 585, *noviele : femiele* 2015–16, *noviele : biele* 2127–28; *certes* 48, 267, 312, etc.; *tieste : bieste* 527–8, *tieste* 529, 534, *tieste : fieste* 539–40; *beste* 470, 520, *bieste : tieste* 527–8, *bieste* 582; *apiele* 869, 915, *apiele : puchiele* 1247–48, *apielent* 402, etc. In pretonic syllables *e* seems more common than *ie*, e.g. *merchi* 215, *merchie* 611, *merchient* 1506, *merciiés* 1492; *servés* 24, *serviras* 2860, *service* 124, *servisce* 997, 4513; *bielement : isnielement* 415–6, 601–2, 1249–50, etc.; *apiela* 1740; *perdu* 3094; *serjans* 2747, 2751, *serjant* 2753, *serjant : vergant* 3257–58, etc.

§ 12. -ĔLLUS, -ĔLLOS > pic. *-eaus* > *-iaus*.

In this combination and in the endings -ĬLLUS, -ĬLLOS, -ĬCULU + *s* and -ĬLIU + *s* *Le roman de Silence* has remarkable uniformity: everywhere the picard form *-iaus*, *-aus* is found, written more often than not with an *l*. -ĔLLUS, -ĔLLOS > *-iaus*, e.g. *castials* 339, 1649, 5472, etc.; *bials* 433, 451, 509, etc.; *damoisials : bials* 3011–12, 3163–4; *bedials* 1997; *mesials : bials* 2133–4; *oisials* 2388; *anials* 3001; *vasscials* 5945. -ĬLLUS, -ĬLLOS > *-iaus*, *-aus*, e.g. CAPILLOS > *cevials* 2998, 4075; ECCE ILLOS > *cials* 6705, *çals* 3, 3023, 5508, etc.; ĬLLOS > *als* 747, 877, 1155, etc., *auls* 268, 534, 1487, etc., *aus* 228. -ĬCULU + *s* > *-aus*, e.g. *ortals* 1944; and similarly -ĬLIU + *s*, e.g. *consals* 1252, 1255, 1434, etc.

§ 13. Open E + Latin or Gallo-Roman yod > **iey* > pic. *i*.

This result is, of course, common to picard and francien, and the forms found in *Le roman de Silence* are normal, e.g. LECTU(M) > *lit* 612, *lis* (c. s. sg.) 623; DELECTU(M) > *delit* 753, 767, 773, etc.; EXLECTA(M) > *eslite* 446.

§ 14. MĔLIUS > *miels* > pic. *mieus*, which sometimes levels to *mius*.

The forms *miols* 91, 92, 94, *miols : viols* 2963–4; and *mioldres* 676, 2693, 4190, etc., *enmioldrer* 4552, *enmiodrement* 3269 are found throughout. According to Gossen these forms are common in the charters of Tournai, Mons and Douai.[95]

[95] *Op. cit.* in n. 94, p. 49, n. 1.

§ 15. Tonic and pretonic open E + nasal + consonant > pic. *en*[ɛ̃].Ē, Ĭ > tonic and pretonic closed E + nasal + consonant > pic. *en*[ɛ̃].

This is in essence an orthographical problem and one not easy to solve in a literary text which has a mixture of francien and picard forms. An examination of the rhymes gives us some help, but not as much as one might hope. The form *enfens* is found at 2927; but the fact that *enfant : atant* 1861–2, *: pendant* 2113–4, *: quant* 2459–60, *: partant* 4193–4, etc., proves that for the poet the final vowel of this word is [ã]. The form *mengier* appears at 836, 1035, 2759, etc.; but the fact that *mengier : dangier* 835–36, 2759–60, that *mangier : dangier* 485–6, that *dangier : cangier* 993–94 justifies us in accepting that for the poet the first vowel of *mengier, mangier* is pronounced [ã]. To some degree the following generality can be accepted: when the poet wrote *an* he pronounced [ã]; but when he wrote *en* there is a choice to be made between [ɛ̃] and [ã], a choice which is influenced to some degree by the evidence of the grammarians of the sixteenth century, etc., and by the findings of the A.L.F., but which is confused by the obvious fact that the manuscript of *Le roman de Silence* is not an autograph of the poet. In a literary text where the forms are far from homogeneous one can do little more than assemble examples of the spellings.

(i) *an* for etymological *en*: TEMPUS > *tans* 14, 1339, 5030, etc.; SERVIENTE(M) > *serjans* 2747, 2751, *serjant* 2753, *serjant : vergant* 3257–8; SINE > *sans* 58, 98, 106, etc., but *sains* 1548; INSIMUL > *emsanble : samble* 207–8, *ensanble* 755, *ensanble : samble* 1015–16; SIMULARE > *samble : emsanble* 207–8, *sambler : tranbler* 721–2, *samble : ensanble* 1015–16; *TREMULARE > *tranbler : sambler* 721–2, *tramble : samble* 4925–6; and FEMINA(M) > *feme* 181, 383, 561, etc., usually in rhyme with *Eufeme* 5241–2, 6179–80, 6586–7. The rhyme *fame : blasme* 1695–6, 1733–4, 2083–4 seems to prove that the poet pronounced [fam].

(ii) *en* for etymological *an*: MANDUCARE > *mengier : dangier* 835–6, 2759–60, *mengier* 1035, but *mangier : dangier* 485–6, *mangier* 1033, 1127; INFANTE(M) > *enfens* 2927, but *enfans, enfant* uniformly elsewhere. CANTARE always gives *canter* 389, 2772, etc., and ANNU(M) > *an* 757, 976, 1055, *posan* 976, *oan* 5324. Cst. *Engletiere* 107, 147, 237, etc., *Englois* 140.

§ 16. Ē, Ĭ > tonic free closed E > *ei* > pic. *oi*.

The form *oi* is found everywhere, e.g. *moi* 466, *toi* 465, *soi* 59; *avoir* 46, *voloir* 671, *valoir* 127; *faloit* 62, *estoit* 254, *avoit* 255, but *estait* 5468;

pòroit 14, *avroit* 63, *venroit* 553; ITER > *oire* 218, 4975, etc. In the same way closed E + yod > *oi*, e.g. *riçoise* 1530, 4742, *richoise* 967, 3623, 4739, *richoize* 966.

§ 17. VIDĒRE, *CADĒRE, SEDĒRE.

These three infinitives appear almost always in their picard form, but with the hiatus retained; there is no example of *vir, sir*. VIDĒRE > *veïr* 736, 1338, 1569, etc., *veïr : jehir* 637–8, 647–8, etc., *veïr : tehir* 927–8, 2025–6; but *veöir* 3658, *veöir : seöir* 1919–20. *CADĒRE > *chaïr* 5560. SEDĒRE > *asseïr : entreveïr* 749–50, but *seöir : veöir* 1919–20.

§ 18. Tonic closed E influenced by yod. RĒGULA(M), TĒGULA(M).

No example.

§ 19. Ē, Ĭ > tonic free closed *e* + nasal > pic. *ain-e*.

The picard form is very common, e.g. *çainte* 475, *çaint : ataint* 589–90, but *açaigne : adagne* 1615–16, *enchante : m'ante* 1737–8; MINUS > *mains* 10, 35, 48, etc.; *paine : sesmaine* 21–22, *paine* 824, 907, etc., *painne* 298, 742, 1133, etc., *painne : demainne* 1183–4, *painne : sesmainne* 2165–6, etc.; *plain* 288; SINU(M) > *sain : frain* 855–6; *sainiés* 471.

§ 20. -ILIUS, -ILIS > pic. *-ius, -ieus*.

As we have seen in §§ 4–5, the scribe who copied *Le roman de Silence* prefers to write *l* even where that *l* is clearly vocalized. For him -ILIUS, -ILIS > *-ils*, and here vocalization is less likely. FILIUS > *fils* 1585, 2445, 2448, etc., but *filx* 3632, cas régime *fil* 2263, etc.; SUPERCILIU(M) + *s* > *sorcils* 1919. Similarly, GENTILIS > *gentils* 99, 960, 2329, etc., cas régime *gentil* 6014; VILIS > *vils* 969, 1569, etc., cas régime *vil* 1843, but *viuls* 861, 865, etc. Cp., too, *vilment* 443, *vilment : piument* 621–2, *sutilment* 1408. All these forms are more or less francien.

§ 21. -IVU(M) > pic. *-iu, -ieu*.

These forms are rare. FUGITIVUS > *fuitils* 5800, where the scribe still insists on writing *l*; PENSIVUS > *pensius* 5859. Cp. *naïs : païs* 291–2 and the forms *soltive* 2154, *hastivement* 3476.

§ 22. I + *n* + *w* > pic. *iun*.

There are no examples of this development. *CINQUE is no found. TENUIT > *tint* 146, *maintint* 108, etc.; VENUIT > *vint* 143, 239, 278, etc., *parvint* 717.

§ 23. Tonic open Ŏ + *l* + consonant > pic. *au*.

In *Le roman de Silence* the diphthong *ou* does not open to *au*, and in any case the scribe writes *ol*. VOLERE > in the future *volrai* 1006, 3661, *volra* 414, 570, 837, etc., *voldra* 1730, *volront* 1160, 2848; in the conditional *voldroie* 2014, *volroit* 455, 2096, 3787, etc.; *volroient* 3416; in the past historic *volt* 424; in the imperfect subjunctive *volsist* 1336. TOLLERE > in the conditional *tolroit* 1383, DOLERE > *dolroit : volroit* 3927–8. COLLOS > *cols* 1162; POLLICE(M) > *pols* 596, *polcier* 1923; *VOLVITA(M) > *volt* 1925, *voltice* 1936, *voltices* 1941; SOLIDU(M) > *soldees* 3672, *soldoie* 5673, *soldoiés* 3663.

§ 24. Tonic open Ŏ + Latin or Gallo-Roman yod > pic. *ui*.

Here the text hesitates between *oi* and *ui*. Among the forms derived from the verb *anoier* are *anoier : manoier* 2869–70, *anoi : moi* 883–4, but *anuie* 3879, *anuit : nuit* 2783–4, 3381–2, *anuit : aduit* 1801–2, *anuiés : fuiés* 3775–6, *anui* 408, *anui : lui* 809–10, 3253–4, 3271–2, *anui : celui* 3493–4, 3557–8, 3875–6, etc. ANGUSTIA(M) > *angoisse* 2011, 3243, 3707 and *angoissce : poissce* 3955–6, but *anguissce : puissce* 3159–60, 3379–80, *anguisse : puisse* 3789–90. PUGNATA(M) > *puignie* 42.

§ 25. LŎCU(M), FŎCU(M), JŎCU(M).

Picard forms and forms which are more or less francien exist side by side. LŎCU(M) > *liu* 734, 2868, 3056, etc., *liu : giu* 3337–8, 3433–4, 4125–6, *lius* 3035, 3037, 3395, etc., but *leu : Deu* 461–2, *leu : geu* 3987–8. FŎCU(M) > *fu* 359, 361, *fus* 409, 3313, *fus : plus* 409–10, *fus : sus* 5959–60. JŎCU(M) > *giu* 2649, *giu : liu* 3337–8, 3433–4, 4125–6, etc., *gius : kius* 1239–40, but *geu : leu* 3987–8. Analogous words which might have shown a triphthong reduced to *-iu-* or a diphthong reduced to *-u-* are rare, e.g. OCULOS > *ioils* 4151, *iols* 3630, 5907, *iolx* 4921; *URGOLI + *s* > *orghols* 5656, *orgiols* 2414; SOLET > *siolt : violt* 635–6, *siolt : siolt* 3389–90, *siolt* 2633, 2989, 2994; VOLES > *viols* 850, 860, 3751, etc., *vios* 3752, *veuls* 851; VOLET > *violt* 9, 46, 133, etc., *velt* 4080; DOLIU(M) + *s* > *diols* 2104, 3055, 3245, etc., cas régime *dol* 3015, 3093, etc., cas sujet pl. *duel* 3061; DOLET > due[l]t : requel(ue)t 2671–2.

§ 26. Tonic free closed O > pic. *ou* > *eu*.

The ending -ŌRE(M) gives almost always *-or*. HONORE(M) > *honor* 10, 41, *onor* 1579, 2456, *honor : menor* 2311–12, 2379–80, 2651–2, etc., *honors* 47, 101, 261, etc. The only exception seems to be FLORE(M) > *flor* 1813, but *fleur* 1816, 1817, 1820, etc. The ending -OSU(M) > usually *-os*, e.g. *falose* 123, *mervellose* 344, 2689, 3205,

mervellose : engignose 1869–70, *mervelloses : precioses* 1515–16. Forms in *-eus* are not rare, e.g. *honteus* 647, *hisdeus* 3385, *voiseus : noiseus* 1399–1400. It is possible that forms in *-ous* exist, but as so often the scribe prefers to write *l* for *u*, e.g. *orgellols : fillols* 2817–18, *joiols* 5130, *mervellols* 5424. On the other hand *-ols* in these words may simply be a spelling for *-os*, e.g. *amorols : nols* 501–2, where *nols* = *nos*, for *nous* is never found. DUOS > *deus* 590, *ansdeus* 4891, *deus : honteuls* 4661–2, *.ii. : eus* 3355–6; but as cas sujet one finds *andoi* 301, 1202, 1253, etc., *anbedoi : doi* (< DEBEO) 1285–6, *anbedui* 3251. PRŌDE > *pros* 512, 577, 1209, etc., *pros : desos* 2641–2, *pros : tols* 2685–6; *prols* 3012, *prols : tols* 393–4, 2397–8; and *preus* 1509, 1517, etc. SUPER > *sor* 456, 493, 990, etc., *ensorquetolt* 507, *deseur* 2725, *sore : secorre* 5509–10, *seure : eure* 495–6. LUPU(M) > *leu : preu* 2713–4, *leus : seus* (< SOLUS) 3829–30, *leus* 5510. *JOVENE(M) > *jovene* 1045, *jovenes* 3818.

§ 27. Closed O + Latin or Gallo-Roman yod > pic. *oi*, sometimes *o*, the latter especially in learned words.

BUSK > *bos* 367, 373, 416, etc., *bos : gros* 345–6, *bos : enclos* 2223–4. The learned words discussed by Gossen are not found in *Le roman de Silence*. The ending -ORIA(M) > *-orie*, which counts as two syllables, the mute *e* included; (cp. *contrarie : faire* 1025–6, *contrarie : affaire* 3957–8, *larmies* 2997, *monies* 3810 and the subjunctives *vivie* 1528, *boivie* 5968, *boivie : aperçoivie* 5965–6, *rendie* 3465, in none of which the *-i-* has syllabic value). As examples of words in -ORIA(M) can be quoted *mimorie : victorie* 1175–6, *estorie* 1660, 3138, *estorie : memorie* 2657–8.

§ 28. Open and closed O + nasal > nasalized *o*, *ou*.

The form in *o* is found in nearly all examples.

(i) In a tonic syllable + mute *e*: *somes* < SUMUS 1744, 2416, 4617; *Rome* 2814; *some* < SUMMA(M) 4236, 4682, etc., *some : nome* 869–70, *some : home* 1305–6, 1851–2; *home* 113, 186, 330, etc., *homes* 378, *ome* 57; *prodome* 138, 139, *prodomes* 161; *corone : persone* 1497–8.

(ii) In a tonic syllable before a nasal become final: *com* 178; *oquoison : maison* 149–50, 817–8; *om* 12, 55, *on* 50, *prodom* 131, *falcon* 93, etc.

(iii) In a tonic syllable blocked by a nasal + another consonant: *ont* 12, 42, 45, etc., but *unt* 3, 2188, etc.; *sont* 85, etc., but *sunt* 303, 373, 1183, etc.; *venront* 203, *volront* 1160, *iront : diront* 1189–90. The rhymes *funt : ont*, 533–4 *respont : deffunt*

1145–6, etc., show that the forms in *-unt* are only orthographical variants.

(iv) O + nasal + vowel in an initial syllable: *honor* 41, *honors* 47, 261, *honera* 128, *doner* 132, 133, *donoit* 129, etc.

(v) O + nasal + consonant in an initial syllable: *conmande* 3, *conmans* 112, *conmant* 115, *conmencier* 4, 105, *conmence* 77, *conjoïe* 72, *contreë* 154, *conter : monter* 155–56, *confundue* 160, etc. In most of these examples the nasal consonant in the initial syllable appears as a tilde in the manuscript.

(vi) POMU(M) > *pome : home* 6047–8, *pome* 6072, 6080.

(ii) PRETONIC VOWELS

§ 29. In an initial syllable A can remain unchanged after a velar consonant and in hiatus.

(i) After a velar consonant: CAPILLOS and its derivatives give *cevials* 4075, *kavelure* 1909, 1913, *kievelure* 1907.

(ii) After a velar and in hiatus: *CADĒRE and its derivatives > *chaïr* 5560, *chant* 5616, *chaï* (past historic 3) 3079, 5496, 5628, *çaient* (subjunctive present 6) 5590, but *chiet* 492, 5549, 5627, *cheüs* 5499; CATELLAS > *chaieles* 309, 5604, *caieles* 3839, *kaieles* 3252, but *kieles* 2803. To these examples may be added the forms *chaiens* 2740, *chaëns* 3829, 4057, 4108, *laiens : çaiens* 2733–4, *çaiens* 1064.

(iii) For the development of initial *i* and *e* to *a* in SIGELLU(M) see the forms *saiel* 4390, 4845, but *seël* 4547, 5108; *saiele* < SIGILAT 4360; *ensaëlé* 4877, but *enseëler* 4856, 5057, *enseëlai* 5075.

§ 30. Pretonic A or E in hiatus before various vowels as the results of the disappearance of a Latin consonant > mute *e* in picard as in francien.

This mute *e* is nearly always there, with full syllabic value, e.g. *aseür : eür* 2045–6, *seür : eür* 2065–6, *segurement : durement* 2177–8, *asseüre* (indicative present 3) *: jure* 2195–6, *aseüre* (indicative present 3) 5683; *meïsme : sofime* 69–70, *meïsme* 2098, *meïsmes* 843, 2201, 5342, etc., *meësme* 495, *meësmement* 1713, 2665. Cp. *maälle* 62; and cst. *mesme* 1990, 4278, 4652, etc., *imesmes* 2088.

§ 31. Ē, Ĕ, Ĭ > initial *e* in contact with a labial consonant > pic. *e* and sometimes *u*, *ou*.

Examples are rare and they prove nothing: *jumieles : puchieles* 279–80, 1457–8, *jumieles : femieles* 1693–4, etc., but *premierement* 4680.

§ 32. Pretonic *e* + yod > pic. *oi*, *i*.

Both forms are found, but true doublets are rare. The form *maniiers*, as a substantive and as an infinitive, 632, is found beside *manoier : anoier* 2869–70, *manoiant* 5072, 5478; and *amolir : tolir* 859–60 beside *amoloier : proier* 551–2, *amoloier : foloier* 1325–6. Cp. *otroi* (indicative present 1) 1087, *otroié* 974, 1491, *otroie* (subjunctive present 3) 1699; *castie* (indicative present 3) 838, 1641, *castie* (indicative present 3) *: bastie* (p.p., f.sg.) 957–8, *castïement : aliëment* 1265–6; *proier* 1337, *proier : amoier* 1333–4, *proiere* 1257, 1335; *nient* 53, 238, 512, *nient : tient* 1345–6, *nient : maintient* 1571–2, but *niënt* 300, etc.

§ 33. Pretonic *e* and *o* + *s* (coming usually from a yod) > pic. *i*.

Picard forms are common, but almost equally so are francien forms. COGNOSCERE > *conoistre* 2161, 2185, 6169, but *connissons* 4721, *conniscïés* 4922, *conisances* 5494. Beside *okison* 1256, *oquison* 2738 are found the forms *oquoison* 149, 1457, *oquoison : raison* 669–70, 2441–2, *oquoison : maison* 817–8, but *oquison : raison* 1283–4, which seems to prove that the poet wrote *oquoison*. Cp. *damoisiel* 783, *damoisiele* 978, 1566.

§ 34. Pretonic *e* + palatalized *l* or *n* > pic. *i*, *ei*, *e*.

In this circumstance one finds *e* in nearly all examples. SENIORE(M) > *segnor* 168, 224, 629, etc., but *signorie* 455. INGENIARE > *engignier* 2297, 4155, 6457.. MELIORE(M) > *mellor* 983, 1324, etc. CONSILIARE > *consellier* 1342, 1391, etc. VIGILARE > *vellier* 719, *velle : conselle* 6461–2, but *villié : desparellié* 63–4, which seems to prove that *villié* is a scribal spelling. *APPARICULARE > *apparellier* 199, *apparelliés* 217, *desparellié* 63, *apparelliëment* 130. Cp. *travellier* 58, *travellié : vellié* 545–6.

§ 35. Free initial *e* becomes *i* in certain words.

The word *heritier* and its derivatives always have an *i* in the initial syllable, e.g. *ireté* 1467, 6344, 6597, etc., *ireté : verité* 2199–2200, *desirite : petite* 2447–8, *desiretez : veritez* 6447–8, *iretere* 314, *iretage* 1691, 6598, 6643, etc. On the contrary, HERETICU(M) > *erite* 3935.

§ 36. Initial O before a nasal > pic. *a* in certain words.

*DAMNATICU(M) > *damage* 1692, 5682, 6661, *damages* 6157, *damagié* 4052, but *domage* 4805. No examples are found of *prametre*, *an* = *on*, except perhaps in the rhyme *promis : tramis* 3773–4, but cp. *promet* 1195. HONORE(M) > *honor* 10, 41, etc., *onor* 1579, 2456, but *anor* 142. Cp. also *ant* 2125 = *ont*, *unt*; and *fant* 3100 = *font*, *funt*.

§ 37. Reduction of initial and countertonic *o*, *i* to *e*.

This reduction is rare. It probably represents a scribal spelling: *denai* 5077 < DONAVI, *fenie* 5762, *senefie* 5842, *descipline : mescine* 3785–6.

[to be continued]

LEWIS THORPE

KING JOHN'S DISASTER IN THE WASH

The loss of King John's baggage train in the Wash and the manner of this monarch's death have become part of that assorted collection of irrelevant incident which make up what every schoolboy and many adults know about the history of mediaeval England. The classical account of the King's disaster was published by Sir William St. John Hope in 1906.[1] His reconstruction of events has become orthodox; despite the fact that it was placed under a very damaging examination by Gordon Fowler in 1952,[2] it was still repeated in standard works, by Dr. Lane Poole, for example, in 1955,[3] and by Professor Frank Barlow in the same year.[4] The present paper is intended to reinforce, extend and deepen Fowler's criticism of St. John Hope and also to put forward a reconstruction of the disaster which differs from those they have advanced.

There are a number of fixed points which provide an unalterable framework for the story. Royal letters are attested at King's Lynn on 9, 10 and 11 October, and at Wisbech and Swineshead on the 12th. Thus between the morning of the 11th and the night of the 12th King John made a journey of some 50 miles from Lynn to Swineshead, via Wisbech, which he may have reached on the 11th but cannot have left before the 12th. It was on this journey that the disaster, such as it was, occurred.

On this framework St. John Hope erected a structure of detail held together by several interlocking assumptions. One was that John and his troops moved faster than their baggage, John travelling to Wisbech without the train which moved more slowly, and by a diverging route, to Cross Keys and then across the Wellstream towards Sutton. A second assumption was that the route which he allotted to John on the 12th, through Leverington, Tydd St. Giles and Tydd St. Mary, to Sutton, presented no special difficulties; this, St. John Hope felt, explains why the King and his army survived while the baggage train was lost. A third important assumption was that the baggage train was very large and its disaster complete; this led him to seek a point of crossing which was wide enough for the whole train to be engulfed at one and the same time. The last, which Fowler also shares, was that King John's visit to Wisbech was deliberate, a result of planning rather than unforeseen circumstances. There is no evidence to support any of these assumptions and a great deal to suggest that they are incorrect.

St. John Hope derived much of his story from the narrative of Roger of Wendover, written 1225–30. Roger, who specialized in the sensational,[5] made

[1] "The loss of King John's Baggage Train in the Wellstream in October, 1216," *Archaeologia*, lx, 93–110.

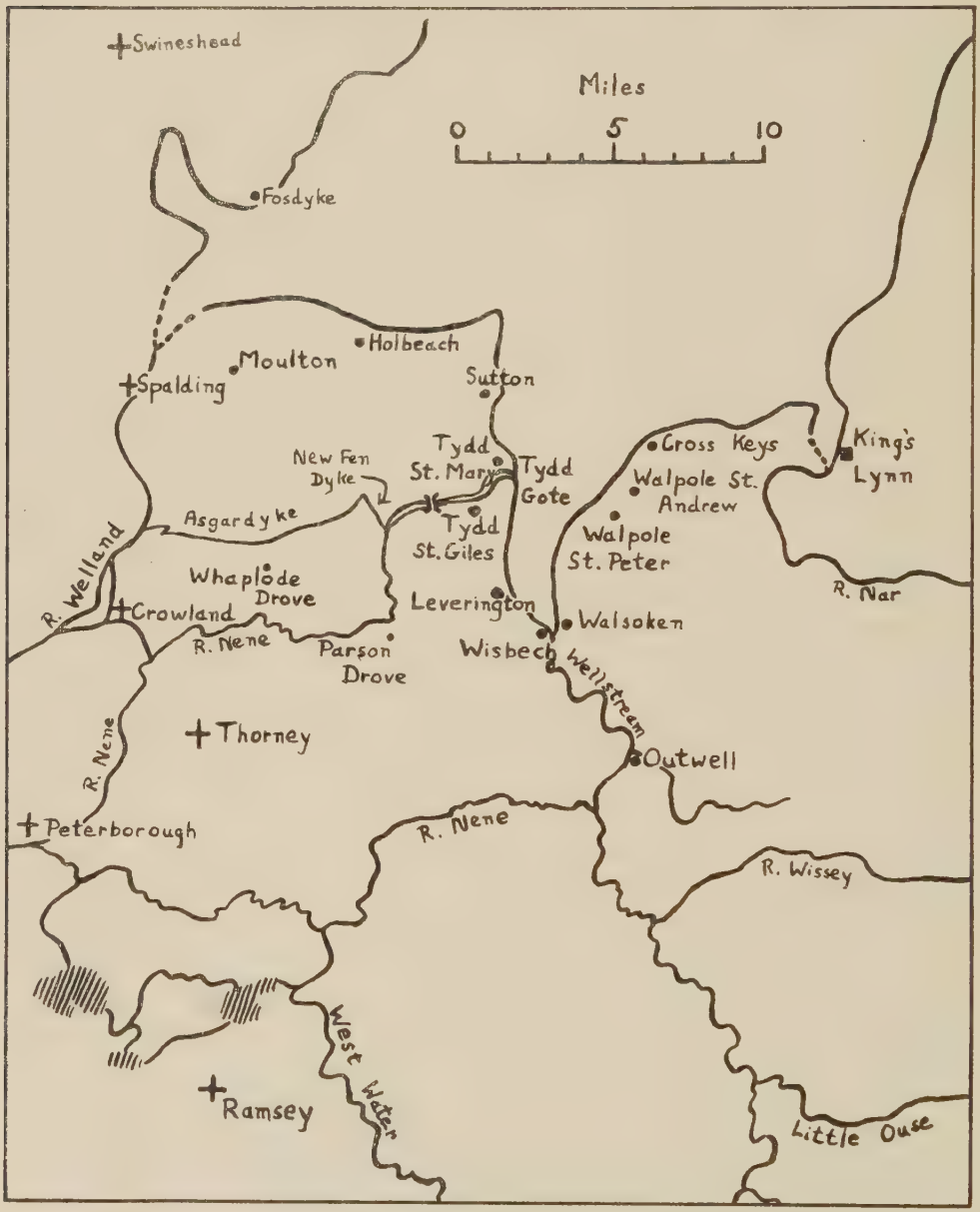
[2] "King John's Treasure," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, xlvi, 4–20.

[3] *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta*, 2nd edn., p. 485, where Fowler's paper is noted.

[4] *The Feudal Kingdom of England 1042–1216*, p. 435.

[5] Cf., for example, his account of the loss of Hugh de Boves at sea. (Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard (Rolls Series), ii, 623.)

the disaster total "He lost all his waggons, carts, and pack-horses, with his treasures and precious vessels, and everything which he loved with special care." "The ground opened in midst of the waves, and there were bottomless whirl-pools which engulfed everything, with men and horses, so that no man



THE FENLAND IN THE TIME OF KING JOHN

escaped to tell the King of the disaster."[6] This St. Albans tradition was later embellished by Matthew Paris, who enumerated the King's losses further:—"his carts, his pack-horses, with loot and booty, and all his treasure and household goods," the quicksand "swallowing up men, arms, tents, victuals and all the King's valuable possessions except his life."[7]

As Fowler argued, these passages are undoubtedly exaggerated and unreliable.[8] Indeed, there is some possibility that they are little more than dramatic inflations of a source also used in the chronicle of the abbey of Coggeshall, which was composed some time before Wendover's work.[9] Both the Coggeshall text and Matthew Paris, for example, use the rare diminutive *supellectilis* for the King's household goods, and both have quicksand in their stories.[10] Moreover, Wendover's narrative contains contradictions which were possibly derived from a confused understanding of a sequence of events which Coggeshall gives correctly. Coggeshall states that John's final illness was accelerated by two things: first, by the arrival of messengers from Dover bearing the bad news that his garrison there was considering surrender, and secondly, by his grief at the losses he had sustained in crossing the Wash. Thus Coggeshall juxtaposes the arrival of messengers and the King's reaction to the disaster. So also, in a negative fashion, does Wendover, for he states, on the one hand, that the King scarcely escaped with his army, and, on the other, that no one survived to bear the tale to the King.[11] Why, if the King was so closely involved that he scarcely escaped, should there be any question of his learning of the disaster from survivors? Was not Wendover simply expressing some dim memory of a source in which messengers and the events in the Wash had been connected as causes of the King's decline? There is more than a hint in this that we have, not two independent stories of these events, but only one.

At all events, the Coggeshall chronicler presents a disaster on a much more modest scale. According to him, the King lost "his Chapel with his relics, and some of his pack-horses with divers household goods." "Many of his *familia* were drowned in the sea and sucked into the quicksand" because they had tried to cross "carelessly and too soon, before the tide had receded."[12] This is very different from the bottomless whirlpools of Wendover's fanciful imagination, and from the picture which St. John Hope accepted of the

[6] *Chron. Maj.*, ii, 667.
[7] *Historia Anglorum*, ed. F. Madden (Rolls Series), ii, 190.
[8] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 6–7. On the general value of these writers see V. H. Galbraith, *Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris* (Glasgow, 1944).
[9] *Chronicon Anglicanum R. de Coggeshall*, ed. J. Stevenson (Rolls Series), pp. 183–4. The evidence points to a common source rather than direct derivation because the St. Albans writers did not get the whole Coggeshall story. See below, pp. 85–86.
[10] "In vivo sabulone" (Coggeshall). Cf. "et sabulo qui vivus dicitur" (Paris).
[11] Cf. Wendover, "nec pes unus evasit qui casum regi nuntiaret" with Coggeshall, "Huc ergo cum venissent nuncii inclusorum castri Doverae et intimassent causam adventus sui" (*Coggeshall*, pp. 183–4).
[12] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 183–4.

engulfment of a baggage train two miles long.[13] Moreover, even this modest sketch may contain exaggeration and distortion. Like Wendover, the Coggeshall writer wanted to make his disaster properly disastrous.

As Fowler has shown, St. John Hope's assumptions about the size of the baggage train are unwarranted and unsound.[14] King John travelled light, with a household in which traditional offices were designed for a life of movement; the kitchen and buttery with its carters, the bearer of the King's Bed, the tent-keeper, the napier, and the scullions, for example, each with his pack-horse.[15] In John's time the Wardrobe seems to have included a permanent staff of five pack-horse men and several carters, two in 1209, four in 1212[16]; it was transported on "long" carts, a type of vehicle to which two men and four or five horses seem normally to have been allotted.[17] Other household officers also had their carts; there was even a special one for the King's venison.[18] At times the Wardrobe carters were reinforced. Sometimes much of the work was done by hiring small two-horse carts to meet special requirements; the column which left King's Lynn may well have been increased in this way. Hence it is impossible to estimate the number of vehicles and pack-horses which were with the King on any one particular journey. But modern authorities have concurred in assuming that the records convey an accurate impression of the numbers involved, that where numbers are stated they cover all the vehicles in use for a particular purpose at a particular time. If this is so, the "harness" and money of the Wardrobe might at times be carried in one two-horse cart, or in one or two long carts. In time of war more vehicles must have been needed to carry arms and cash; sometimes four and even seven carts operated together; but we must still imagine the resulting column as a small one.[19] Lady Stenton considers that the King's Chapel in John's time was still carried on two pack-horses just as it had been carried two or three generations earlier.[20] In some respects government was still very personal and still comparatively primitive.

The baggage train normally travelled with the King; this, indeed, was its *raison d'être*. Sometimes part of the train might be immobilized and its contents stored in some safe place, but this only points to the need to keep the remainder moving efficiently. Indeed, when the movements of the

[13] *Loc. cit.*, p. 104.
[14] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 8–9.
[15] Constitutio Domus Regis in *Dialogus de Scaccario*, ed. Charles Johnson, pp. 132, 133, 135.
[16] *Rot. Liberate*, pp. 118, 122, 128, 135, 159; *Documents Illustrative of English History in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries*, ed. H. Cole (London, 1844), pp. 231, 233, 236, 259, 260. These men also served the Chamber, from which, as yet the Wardrobe was but narrowly separated. See T. F. Tout, *Chapters in Administrative History*, i, 167–9.
[17] See, for example, *Pipe Roll 13 John*, p. 44; *Documents Illustrative of English History*, pp. 242, 243, 248, 249.
[18] *Pipe Roll 11 John*, p. 27.
[19] See, in particular, T. F. Tout, *op. cit.*, i, 164–9 and J. E. A. Jolliffe, *Angevin Kingship*, p. 141.
[20] *English Society in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 22.

household baggage can be followed in detail, as, for example, when vehicles were hired, they usually tally exactly with the movements of the King. One such instance may be taken from June and July 1212, when, prior to a progress through the northern counties, the King left two of the Wardrobe carts at Kingshaugh on 10 June.[21] On the same day, one two-horse cart was hired to carry the tackle and money of the Wardrobe as the King journeyed north. The hire was paid at regular intervals, usually of two or three days, until the cart was finally discharged at Nottingham on 5 July. The cart's itinerary did not deviate at all from the itinerary of the King; it even accompanied him to the hunting lodges of Inglewood. Although the record does not make it absolutely clear that it always kept up with him, it certainly did so for most of the journey and there is no evidence that it fell behind at any point; it went from Bowes to Appleby in a day.[22]

All this was in time of peace. In time of war, in an area like the Fenland which was predominantly rebel in sympathy and where travel by road was difficult, there would be powerful reasons for keeping an undivided column. The army could not be separated from its supplies; government could not be separated from its impedimenta; the King, especially, was unlikely to let such of his regalia, money and precious movables as he had with him, far from his sight. In 1216 only some great urgency could have created the kind of separation which St. John Hope imagines between the King and his army, on the one hand, and the baggage train and treasure, on the other. There is no evidence for such an explanation of the King's visit to Wisbech on 12 October.

Indeed, there is some evidence that part of the usual baggage train must have accompanied the King, in that our knowledge of the visit to Wisbech is drawn entirely from attestations of royal letters. One enrolled letter close and two enrolled letters patent, one of which was made out in octuple form, were dated at Wisbech on 12 October.[23] Our knowledge of the detail of Chancery practice at this time is incomplete. Nevertheless, such a dating would normally imply that these letters were authorized at Wisbech on the 12th, and they may well also have been engrossed and sealed there. If this is so, then John must certainly have had some members of his writing office with him on this journey. Now these men would be drawn from the clerks of his Chapel, and, according to the Coggeshall writer, the Chapel was involved in the disaster. In this passage he was probably thinking of vestments, consecrated vessels and the like, for he goes on immediately to speak of relics, but, even so, those who manned the writing office and those who had charge of the King's Chapel were drawn from one and the same body. Thus there is evidence, albeit tenuous and fragile, which links part of the paraphernalia and personnel

[21] Rotulus misae 14 John, printed in *Documents Illustrative of English History*, p. 233. For the expenses of the carters and horses at Kingshaugh and later at Nottingham see *ibid.*, p. 248.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 233–5.

[23] *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, 291; *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, p. 199.

of government with John's journey to Wisbech. Moreover, the department concerned was identical, or closely related, to one stated to have been involved in the disaster. In view of this and the complete absence of any documentary or literary support for St. John Hope's hypothesis, we must assume that the royal army and its train were never divided, that they followed not two separate routes, but only one. On this basis, I shall first try to establish both the time and site of the disaster.

All indications are that the disaster had already occurred before Wisbech was reached. The strongest argument for this lies in the timing of the King's movements. On 11 and 12 October he only travelled 13 to 15 miles between Lynn and Wisbech. On the 12th itself he covered 40 miles or so between Wisbech and Swineshead.[24] Now it is reasonable to assume that some kind of disaster, with the resulting rearrangement of baggage and attempts at salvage, could have occurred during the first part of the journey, but, if it occurred after the King left Wisbech, it is very doubtful whether he could have reached Swineshead on the same day. The most likely hypothesis is that John left Lynn on the morning of the 11th, that he suffered the accident within an hour or so of low tide (11.15 a.m.),[25] that he stayed the night of the 11th at Wisbech, and that he set off again in the morning to take advantage of low tide (12 noon) on the 12th.

This receives some support from one of the letters patent dated at Wisbech. This consisted of a safe-conduct, covering the eight days beginning on 14 October, to one Ralf son of Walter and his ship which was taking the "goods and merchandise" of the King to Grimsby. Similar letters were authorized for seven other men and their vessels.[26] In brief, the King arranged at Wisbech to send a small fleet loaded with his possessions to Grimsby. Now there is no evidence that this fleet started from Wisbech; in fact, its point of departure is not mentioned; and there is nothing to establish the identity and provenance of any of the shipmen concerned.[27] Moreover, the two-day delay until the 14th may have been arranged so that the letters could be sent to the port in question. But it is not altogether easy to regard this business as routine, occurring as it did at a critical point and time in the King's journey. He had

[24] There are slight discrepancies between my milages and Fowler's. My calculations are based on a route from Wisbech to Swineshead via Spalding. Doubt as to the detailed route followed makes exact calculations impossible.

[25] I am following the tide tables given by St. John Hope (*loc. cit.*, p. 105).

[26] *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, p. 199. The phrase is "res et mercandise . . . nostre." The seven other recipients were Godfrey le Pohier, Osbert son of Walter, Benedict and Thomas de Beautr', William Alemannus, Reginald But and John son of Alan.

[27] Such indications as there are, however, point to Lincolnshire. In 1219 a Ralf son of Walter was a party to an action concerning property in Lincoln (*Rolls of the Justices in Eyre for Lincs. and Worcs.*, Selden Society, liii, case 816); a Reginald Buch' had property in Mablethorpe in the early thirteenth century (*Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln*, vi, Lincoln Record Society, xli, 31–2); Alan son of Alan and John son of Alan had property in Boston in 1203 (*The Earliest Lincolnshire Assize Rolls*, Lincoln Record Society, vol. 22, cases 1252, 1290); a confirmation by King John of the possessions of the canons of Grimsby included a toft in Grimsby which had been given by a Hugh de Bautr (*Rot. Chartarum*, p. 94).

just left Lynn, one of the greatest ports in the country, inferior only to London, Boston and Southampton.[28] Wisbech, by comparison, was little more than a fishing port, accessible only up a long and probably treacherous estuary. Lynn, not Wisbech, was the obvious place to arrange for the hire of ships and to buy and accumulate "goods and merchandise." Indeed, the purchase of winter supplies seems to have been one of the King's objectives in visiting Lynn, for while there he provided safe-conducts for victuals and wine which were dispatched to Philip Mark, sheriff of Nottingham, for the provisioning of Nottingham castle, and also arranged for the dispatch of "merchandise" of his own to Lincoln.[29] Thus much routine business of this kind had been completed before the King left Lynn.

There are grounds, therefore, for seeking some emergency behind the safe-conducts arranged at Wisbech on the 12th. They carry the scent of the disaster, for among the King's losses noted by Coggeshall were pack-horses. Baggage could be salvaged where pack-horses would drown, and, if the King was suddenly faced with a surplus of baggage over pack-horses, sea-transport was the obvious alternative. Thus the Wisbech writs can be viewed as a direct result of the disaster. They become part of a reconstruction into which the timing of the King's movements and the story of the Coggeshall writer also fit. This involves one new assumption, namely that the King himself intended to move north to Grimsby, or at least to its hinterland. This is not unreasonable. He had just travelled south from this area to Lynn and was certainly marching rapidly north into Lincolnshire once more when approaching death came to affect his movements.

The place of the disaster is a more complex and debatable issue. The chroniclers agree that it occurred in crossing the Wellstream.[30] This ran north through Wisbech to a broad estuary and, in 1216, carried the waters of all the major rivers of the Fenland, except the Welland and part of the Nene, the latter of which drained into the Wellstream estuary at Tydd Gote.[31] At Wisbech the sea banks confining the river were approximately a quarter of a mile apart, but the stream itself was normally only 40 yards wide[32]; at its mouth between Sutton and Cross Keys the estuary was nearly 5 miles wide. St. John Hope placed the accident at the widest point. Fowler, in contrast

[28] See *Pipe Roll 6 John*, pp. xliii–iv.

[29] *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, p. 199; *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, 291.

[30] *Coggeshall*, p. 184; *Chron. Maj.*, ii, 667; *Hist. Anglorum*, ii, 190. It was not until 1607 that Fosdyke, at the mouth of the Welland, was suggested as a site in the folio edition of Camden's *Britannia*. Sir Frederic Madden confused the Wellstream with the Welland (*Hist. Anglorum*, ii, 190); Miss Kate Norgate appears to have done the same (*John Lackland*, p. 282). This confusion existed earlier, for the 1607 edition of Camden centred the disaster at Fosdyle (*sic*) *and* the Wellstream (*Britannia*, London, 1607, p. 398).

[31] See the map, p. 76. This is largely based on Fowler's maps, the most useful of which is in *A Guide to Wicken Fen* (National Trust, 1947), p. 6. See also his map in *loc. cit.*, p. 11, and H. C. Darby, *The Medieval Fenland* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 95–7. For a good impression of the estuary in the seventeenth century see Blaew's map of 1645 reproduced in W. H. Wheeler, *The Fens of South Lincolnshire*, p. 101.

[32] Gordon Fowler, *loc. cit.*, pp. 12–13.

placed it at the narrowest, between Walsoken and Wisbech itself.[33] Although St. John Hope's case depended on unwarranted assumptions about the size of the column and the extent of the disaster, it is probable that he is nearer to the truth than is Fowler.

Fowler's case here was based on several points. First, he assumed that Wisbech lay on the usual route across the Fens. Secondly, he argued that the quicksands which figure in the chronicle stories could not be found in the lower reaches of the estuary. Finally he suggested that the disaster was caused by a tidal bore or eagre in the narrower part of the river.[34] Much of this is unacceptable. Coggeshall clearly states that the disaster occurred, not because of an incoming tide, but because the tide had not yet receded. There is no sound reason for reversing his evidence at this point. The quicksands of contemporary narratives can also be confirmed. Drilling in the estuary, carried out under the direction of Professor W. D. Evans for objectives unconnected with King John, has revealed a thick layer of wet quicksand at mediaeval levels on or near the possible line of a natural causeway. Finally, there is no evidence to confirm that Wisbech lay on the normal route across the Fens in the early thirteenth century. King John had made the crossing in the opposite direction twice before, in 1205 and on 9 October, 1216. There is nothing to show that he passed through Wisbech on either occasion, or, indeed, that he had ever visited the place earlier in his reign. The Gough map of the fourteenth century makes no mention of Wisbech, but it names Fosdyke and Walpole, thus suggesting that these were then points of note on the route, perhaps even the sites of river crossings.[35] The crossing cannot have been easy; if it had been, there would have been no accident; but it was probably better to tackle it where the waters spread out over sandy flats rather than at the point where they flowed deeper and faster within narrower confines. The estuary crossing would shorten the journey considerably; it was certainly used in the seventeenth century;[36] it had a parallel in the north-west of England in the similar passage over the Kent estuary.

The case for the estuary route is strengthened by the probable condition in 1216 of the west bank of the Wellstream from Wisbech to Sutton. Both St. John Hope and Fowler assumed that this provided an easy passage, but, in fact, the direct road between Wisbech and the villages of Holland must have been very difficult, for it involved the crossing of the western branch of the Nene, which flowed into the Wellstream at Tydd Gote.[37] The Nene here was

[33] *Loc. cit.*, p. 13. The suggestion was made earlier by F. J. Gardiner, *History of Wisbech* (Wisbech, 1898), pp. 5–6. Cf. also N. Walker and T. Craddock, *The History of Wisbech and the Fens* (Wisbech, 1849), pp. 211–3.

[34] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 14–7.

[35] See Lady Stenton in *Medieval England*, ed. A. L. Poole (Oxford, 1958), i, 201–2.

[36] See the evidence presented by St. John Hope, *loc. cit.*, pp. 102–3.

[37] For the line of the Nene, or South Eau, see H. E. Hallam, *The New Lands of Elloe* (University College of Leicester, 1954), frontispiece, and the Ordnance Survey 1/25,000 maps of the area.

a navigable river which formed the boundary between Holland and Cambridgeshire; it was linked to the Welland at the famous triangular bridge at Crowland and to a second branch of the Nene near Peterborough,[38] which in turn connected it to the central rivers of the Fenland; it was one of the most important waterways of the area.[39] In Dugdale's day it ended in a wide reach stretching from Tydd Gote upstream to the entry of the New Fen Dyke at Grange Hill Corner.[40] In mediaeval times it was bridged near Tydd St. Giles,[41] but it ran here through very low lying country. Leverington, Newton, and possibly also Tydd St. Giles, seem to have been established only in the course of the twelfth century.[42] The fen was being rapidly reclaimed on both sides of the river. Nevertheless, Asgardyke and New Fen Dyke were not made until John's time and may still have been under construction when war broke out in 1215.[43] The hamlets of Whaplode Drove, Holbeach Drove, Gedney Hill and Sutton St. Edmund, on the Lincolnshire side, and Parson Drove, on the Cambridgeshire side, were probably not yet in existence,[44] and the whole area, including Wisbech itself, lay under an ever-present threat of flooding.[45] Thus the Wisbech route presented not one, but two hazards, first the passage of the Wellstream at Wisbech itself, and secondly, the passage of the Nene and the marshland which lay on both sides of it. It was in avoiding the latter that the chief advantage of the estuary route probably lay, for, in so far as there is any indication of its line, it ran from near Walpole, the point named on the Gough map, to somewhere north of Tydd Gote.[45a]

The most likely hypothesis on the present evidence is that on 11 October John's column met with an accident caused by an over-confident and hasty attempt to cross the Wellstream before low-tide; that this occurred on the route across the estuary from Walpole and that it necessitated a diversion to Wisbech, and perhaps subsequently to the alternative route through Wisbech, in order to rearrange the baggage and send some by sea.

What was lost? The only reasonably certain answer lies in the evidence of the Coggeshall writer and the implications of the Wisbech safe-conducts, that the King lost a number of his pack-horses. As it is unlikely that all their

[38] *Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia*, ed. W. H. Hart and P. A. Lyons (Rolls Series), iii, 139–140, 143–144.

[39] See *ibid.*, iii, 144, for its use as a passage from Crowland to King's Lynn. The connections of these rivers are clearly represented on the Gough map, which, of course, refers to a later situation in which the outflow of the Wellstream had been diverted at Outwell to King's Lynn.

[40] *History of Imbanking and Draining* (2nd edn., London, 1772), map facing p. 218.

[41] H. C. Darby, *op. cit.*, p. 74, n. 2.

[42] H. C. Darby, *Domesday Geography of Eastern England*, pp. 269–72. Cf. *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire* (EPNS, xix), pp. 271, 274, 283.

[43] H. E. Hallam, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–4. For similar activity on the Cambridgeshire side see Edward Miller, *The Abbey and Bishopric of Ely* (Cambridge, 1951), p. 289.

[44] Hallam, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–40; *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire*, p. 277.

[45] *Cart. Rameseia*, iii, 139–40, 143–4; Dugdale, *op. cit.*, p. 299; N. Walker and T. Craddock, *op. cit.*, p. 214. See also in general, H. C. Darby, *op. cit.*, pp. 94–7, 55–60, 113–4, 151.

[45a] I am indebted to Professor W. D. Evans for this information.

loads would be salvaged, we may also accept the Coggeshall writer's inclusion of household goods, among which the Chapel and the relics would deserve special mention. In such a disaster, members of the household staff may also have been lost, but, if so, they must have been insignificant, because no casualty was, or can now be, given a name. Similarly, the loss of the Chapel did not involve the clerks who enrolled the King's letters. A batch of letters patent covering 11 to 15 October was entered on the roll at Sleaford or Newark sometime after the 15th by the clerk who had been chiefly responsible throughout the year for keeping the roll up to date.[46] Thus the evidence of the patent roll points to "business as usual." The close roll is not quite so discouraging. Here a block of entries dated the 12th at Wisbech and Swineshead was entered on the roll by a clerk who had not apparently worked on it before. But any possibility that the clerk usually in charge had been drowned is removed by the fact that later entries on the roll are the work of the scribe responsible for previous entries dated the 11th at Lynn and for many of the entries on the earlier part of the membrane.[47] Thus the clerks responsible for the rolls survived and so did the rolls themselves. These, indeed, are the only material we have which must have crossed the Wash on the King's last journey. All four chancery enrolments, close, patent, charter, and fine, have come down to us in good order along with the duplicate copies. There is some slight staining in the margin of Close Roll no. 14, but none of the other rolls show any sign of a wetting; the waters of the Wellstream never reached the panniers or chests in which they were carried. Even individual letters survived, for at Newark, on or after the 18th, a letter dated the 11th at Lynn, which must have come through the journey as a draft, copy or minute, was entered on the roll.[48] If the Chapel was lost in the disaster, as the Coggeshall writer states, it may well have been because the administrator in the royal clerk led him to think first of saving records rather than relics.

The Coggeshall chronicle mentions no precious goods apart from the Chapel and the relics. Wendover also may have been thinking of consecrated vessels, but spoke more loosely of "treasures, precious vessels and everything which he loved with special care."[49] Matthew Paris, not to be outdone, threw in *all* the treasure.[50] Even in these narratives there is no specific mention of jewels or regalia, and, indeed, there is no direct evidence in any surviving source that the regalia or a collection of royal jewels were in any way involved. The absence of any mention of the regalia is especially significant in view of the Coggeshall reference to the Chapel and relics and Wendover's reference to precious vessels; so important a loss would probably also have been noted.

[46] Public Record Office, Patent Roll no. 15 (18 John), m.1.
[47] P.R.O., Close Roll no. 14 (18 John, part 1), m.1.
[48] Patent Roll no. 15, m.1.; *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, p. 199b.
[49] "cum thesauris, vasis pretiosis, et rebus omnibus, quas propensiori cura dilexit" *Chron. Maj.*, ii, 667).
[50] "omnem thesaurum" (*Hist. Anglorum*, ii, 190).

The only hint that the regalia may have been lost in the Wash lies in the fact that much of John's regalia never descended to his son.[51] But this permits no conclusive arguments, for it could well have suffered other fates. During the civil war John borrowed considerable sums from the Templars and from the citizens of Bordeaux and Ghent, and the regalia may well have been used as security. John had called in the Empress Matilda's regalia from its repository as early as May 1215, a great collection of plate in July 1215, and his own regalia last, in March and April 1216, at a critical point of the war.[52] It is as if he felt that his own regalia was the ultimate financial sacrifice. In June 1216 Hubert de Burgh was ordered to use the plate at Dover castle to pay the King's troops there,[53] and there is no reason to think that John acted differently with the plate in his own hands. By the summer of 1216 he was in dire financial need. In these circumstances, regalia, jewelry, plate, could leave the King's possession and vanish from record only too easily.

In the last resort the inclusion of treasure among the King's losses depends on the credibility of the St. Albans writers. Wendover clearly imagined that treasure, in the modern sense of the word, was lost. Matthew Paris creates a rather different picture, for he used the word in the singular and probably more usual contemporary sense to denote the contents of a treasury, namely, the financial resources, perhaps including plate, but consisting mainly of cash, which the King carried with him. These stories are best set beside an order which John made within a week of the accident. On 18 October he sent a force of 300 Welsh mercenaries to one of his commanders, Savaric de Mauleon, with instructions that their pay and arrears had been fully met up to and including 21 October and that Savaric was to see to their pay thereafter.[54] The pay of these men must have totalled at least £2 10s. per day.[55] It is possible that John had replenished his money chests since the 12th; if so, the source is not obvious for he had not visited any of the usual castle treasuries. In any case, this was scarcely the act of one who had just suffered financial ruin.

It is probable that the St. Albans references to treasure were simply decorations to a story the main elements of which these writers got at second hand. There is also another possibility. The accident probably occurred on 11 October. King John died at Newark during the night of the 18th. Once dead, he was robbed, like his father before him, by the members of his household, who looted his goods and left his body without decent covering.[56]

[51] See Lady Jenkinson's paper "The Jewels lost in the Wash" in *History*, vii (1923). 161, 168. A few items survived at Corfe; see *ibid.*, 167 and *Patent Rolls 1216–1225*, p. 321,

[52] Lady Jenkinson, *loc. cit.*, pp. 163–5. See also *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, p. 174.

[53] *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, 274b.

[54] *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, 291b.

[55] They were normally paid 2d. a day; a few got double that sum (*Documents Illustrative of English History*, p. 260).

[56] For the robbery of Henry II see *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, ed. P. Meyer (Paris, 1891), ll, 9127–9143, and Gerald of Wales, De Principis Instructione, *Opera*, ed. G. F. Warner (Rolls Series), viii, 304.

All this was told to the Coggeshall writer by a clerk who met these men loaded with their booty as he entered Newark and who went to keep watch by the dead King's body and say mass for his soul.[57] For the men who did this deed the accident a week earlier must have been providentially convenient. If they now began to spread the story that the King had lost much more than in fact he had, they would not be the first or last to use the accidents of war to cover their own acquisitive misdeeds. Is it not axiomatic among soldiers that the transport destroyed by shell, mine or bomb, or indeed lost in some other way, is always the one which happened to be carrying the more desirable and valuable equipment? The story of John's treasure has roused human greed;[58] it could equally well have been a product of it. It is significant that the Coggeshall writer, who gives a restrained story of the accident, also knew of the robbery. The St. Albans writers, in contrast, who are the only ones to write of treasure, reveal no knowledge of the robbery. It is possible that, as unwitting accessories, they have foisted on later generations a tale of lost treasure first conceived by the jackals who surrounded John's bed as he lay dying in Newark castle.

J. C. Holt

[57] *Coggeshall*, p. 184.
[58] For some of the treasure hunts see Fowler, *loc. cit.*, pp. 4–5.

SIR WILLIAM OLDHALL, SPEAKER IN THE PARLIAMENT OF 1450-1

The following abbreviations have been used in the references:
BIHR = *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research.*
BM = British Museum.
CCR = *Calendar of Close Rolls.*
CFR = *Calendar of Fine Rolls.*
CPR = *Calendar of Patent Rolls.*
DKR = *Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records.*
EHR = *English Historical Review.*
HMC = Historical Manuscripts Commission.
PPC = *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council,* ed. N. H. Nicolas.
PRO = Public Record Office.
Rot. Parl. = *Rotuli Parliamentorum.*
VCH = *Victoria County History.*

Occasionally under Richard II and Henry IV the Speaker for the Commons had been one whose closest political allegiance was to some member of the royal family who was not in sympathy with the King and was critical of his policy. But more usually the Speaker had been a member of the King's own Household and sometimes a member of the royal council. Under Henry V, perhaps to stand well with him and at the same time to improve the conduct of their own business, the Commons soon got into a fairly regular habit of electing as their Speaker a professional lawyer who was employed in some branch of the royal administration and also had considerable experience of parliament. This habit had persisted and grown stronger under Henry VI. But, although for the Commons to elect as Speaker a lawyer acceptable to the King was becoming common practice, there was no rule about it. And at a parliament which promised a political "show-down," an election outside the normal trend was especially liable to take place. Whom the Commons then chose would mainly depend upon their own political complexion and temper, and who was available qualified by political affiliation to reflect their attitude. But the King had a right to admit and therefore to reject a Speaker. If a Speaker were a "King's man," obviously his election would pass without question; and normally the King needed to have no qualms. If he accepted a Speaker known to belong to a party opposed to the régime, this was almost certainly because the hostility which such a Speaker's election represented could be neither ignored nor for the moment countered. It was just such a situation in which Sir William Oldhall, when first elected to Parliament (for Hertfordshire), became Speaker in November 1450.[1]

When the previous parliament had first met a year before, in November 1449, the little that still remained in northern France of what had once been won by Henry V and painfully held together by his brother, the Duke of

[1] *Official Return of Members of Parliament,* i, 344.

Bedford, was in process of being rapidly lost. The situation was already virtually hopeless. Since 1435, the year of Bedford's death and the defection of Burgundy from the English alliance, military inefficiency and strain had taken heavy toll of English resources. Costly diplomatic efforts had failed to contain the French recovery. One of the few results of negotiation, Henry VI's marriage with Margaret of Anjou, the French Queen's niece, had come to be regarded in England as no more than a successful French "take-over bid" for Anjou and Maine, a cause of suspicion against the English diplomats principally the Duke of Suffolk. Either just before or early in the parliament of 1449–50 those at the head of the Lancastrian administration had resigned office. Financially shaky, administratively unstable, and politically moribund, the Lancastrian government could not protect even its own former leaders: first the former Keeper of the Privy Seal (Bishop Moleyns) was done to death, and then the Duke of Suffolk himself, after being impeached by the Commons, was murdered at sea when on his way into exile. Moreover, the royal marriage had not so far produced an heir: the only descendant of Henry IV now alive was Henry of Windsor himself. As long as this was the case, a state of dangerous uncertainty over the royal succession was inevitable. Richard, Duke of York, as both heir-male and heir-general of Edward III, had a claim stronger by hereditary right than even the King's. Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, grandson of John of Gaunt, was York's keenest rival; but his family had been associated with the policy of peace with France, and he himself with the military débâcle in Normandy. York was bound to be the focus and, being the man he was, the natural leader of any opposition to the discredited party of the Court. He was all the more dangerous for having personal grounds for discontent: in 1445 he had been replaced by the Duke of Somerset as King's Lieutenant-General in France, and his appointment as King's Lieutenant in Ireland in 1447 was one which he had accepted only with reluctance and regarded as tantamount to banishment. At the beginning of the parliament of 1449–50 the Commons had chosen Sir John Popham as Speaker, an old campaigner under Henry V and Bedford, now for some time a member of York's affinity; but, with York out of the country, the government had been able, seemingly, to overrule this election. Between then and the opening of parliament in November 1450 much had happened. The régime of the Duke of Suffolk had collapsed. The Commons, who had impeached the Duke and brought about his fall, had continued unruly and hostile to the government, even after the parliament's place of meeting was changed in April 1450 from Westminster (where it was open to pressure from the City) to Leicester. Then, in the summer months of 1450, came the brief but savage revolt of Jack Cade, in which the rebels demanded a reconstitution of the government and the Duke of York's recall from Ireland, presumably so that he could head the new administration. Hardly had this insurrection been suppressed when news came through of the fall of Cherbourg, which meant that nothing, save Calais alone, was left to the English in northern France. It was now that Richard of York

returned from Ireland. And with him came his Chamberlain, Sir William Oldhall, who was to be Speaker in the parliament which Henry VI had already summoned. This parliament of 1450 was bound to provide the severest test to which the Lancastrian dynasty had yet been exposed.

Oldhall's part in this crisis inevitably was important and justifies a full consideration of his career. A biographical article by C. F. Johnston, published in *The English Historical Review* as long ago as 1910, covered much of the ground. Even so, it has been possible to put together a fuller, more detailed account not only of Oldhall's activities about the time of his Speakership, but also of his earlier career as one of the great professional captains of the French wars, from which he and many like him, some of them his fellow-members of York's retinue, emerged as disappointed, sour, and unforgiving men, shut off from profit in 1450 both at home and abroad, even then ready for mischief, and soon to be eager to bring down a dynasty which had failed itself and them too.

* * *

When William Oldhall was born, probably in the last decade of the fourteenth century (but before 1395), his father's family had been settled for over a century in Norfolk and, especially by favourable marriages with suitable heiresses, had accumulated a number of estates in this county.[2] It was in one such west Norfolk manor at Little Fransham, a score of miles west of Norwich, that Edmund Oldhall, William's father, who had acquired the place by his first marriage with Alice, daughter and coheir of Geoffrey de Fransham, was evidently living at the turn of the century. Alice was presumably William Oldhall's mother, but she was dead by January 1395 when Edmund Oldhall's wife was called Mary.[3] All the Norfolk estates which eventually were to come into William Oldhall's possession were in west and north-west Norfolk. A group of them was within very easy reach of Little Fransham: the manors of Bodney (later given by William to Thetford Priory) and Narford (both of these certainly acquired by William's father), the manor of Great Fransham, and land in Scarning and Dillington (all held of the Duchy of Lancaster), the manor of Creke's or Oldhall's manor (their own family's place) in East Dereham, and the manor of Belhouse in North Tuddenham.[4] To the northwards, halfway between East Dereham and the coast, were lands at Little Ryburgh and Stibbard, subsequently granted by William to Walsingham Priory.[5] Near King's Lynn and the Wash was the manor of Brookhall (or Oldhall) in Dersingham,[6] and then, further round the coast to the eastwards,

[2] *Archaeologia*, XXXVII, pp. 335–50.
[3] *CCR, 1396–99*, 518; *Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, i, B/1235.
[4] F. Blomefield, *An essay towards a topographical history of the County of Norfolk*, VI, 16, 232; IX, 496; X, 208; *CPR*, 1452–61, 102; *Feudal Aids*, iii, 596, 626; *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 435a; Sir William Oldhall's will, in Somerset House, Stockton Register, fo. 21.
[5] *CPR, 1452–61*, 68.
[6] Blomefield, *op. cit.*, VIII, 399; *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 435.

the manor of Nowers in Saxlingham.[7] An important group of estates in east Cambridgeshire—the manor of Ditton Valence and its appurtenances in Ditton Camoys, New Market, Cheveley, Saxton, Kirtling, and Stetchworth—had come into the possession of William Oldhall's father Edmund just before the end of the fourteenth century, and these in due course became William's.[8] Also, in the early years of his career, in the 1420's, William was already holding lands in south-east Yorkshire at Skipwith and Menthorpe, and lands in north Lincolnshire at Laceby near Grimsby, and, further south in the same county, at Grainthorpe, Wragholme, Covenham, Walmsgate, Little Cawthorpe, Ketsby, and Ormesby. These estates undoubtedly had come to him with his wife Margaret, a daughter of William Lord Willoughby of Eresby, as a result of her previous marriage with Sir Thomas Skipwith. Oldhall is once (in 1423) described as resident at South Ormesby and in 1431 as "late of Ormesby," and he and his wife were still occupying these estates in 1441.[9] It was undoubtedly by purchase, presumably in the 1440's, that Oldhall came into possession of a little but compact collection of property in the south-east corner of Hertfordshire. The most important of these Hertfordshire estates was the manor of Hunsdon, which he bought from his lord, the Duke of York, and then proceeded to build upon and occupy as his main residence. From York he had already got a grant for life of the nearby manors of Standon and "Pleshy's" (in Standon) and, very close to Hunsdon itself, he soon acquired the manors of Eastwick and Pishobury (in Sawbridgeworth). Also by grant of the Duke he came to hold for life the manor of Swanscombe near Gravesend, in Kent, and, in Buckinghamshire, the manor of Hambledon near Henley.[10]

William Oldhall's estates were sufficiently extensive to supply something of a basis upon which to build and develop a career. His father's life, too, had been an extremely busy one and can only have brought his family useful contacts, although these would appear to have been mainly influential in East Anglia. In the last year of John of Gaunt's life (1398–9), Edmund Oldhall was the receiver (or local financial agent) for the Duchy of Lancaster estates in Norfolk, an office which he retained under Henry IV and Henry V. Certainly under Henry IV, and perhaps later, he was duchy receiver in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk as well.[11] At the time of the death of Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk, in 1399, Edmund was also one of her receivers, and he later became an executor to Alexander Tottington, Bishop of Norwich (who died in 1413) and to Isabel Ufford, Dowager Countess of Suffolk (who died in 1416).[12] In the

[7] Blomefield, *op. cit.*, IX, 433.
[8] *Ancient Deeds*, i, B/1235, B/1244, B/3779; *Feudal Aids*, i, 177; *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 435a.
[9] *Feudal Aids*, iii, 262, 341, 363; *CCR, 1435–41*, 476.
[10] *VCH, Hertfordshire*, vol. iii, 327, 353, 318; *CPR, 1436–41*, 531; *ibid., 1452–61*, 34; *CFR, 1454–61*, 138.
[11] R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, i, 596; *HMC Report, MSS. of Marquess of Lothian at Blickling Hall, Norfolk*, p. 59.
[12] *CCR, 1399–1402*, 50; *CPR, 1416–22*, 16 (Lambeth Palace Library, Arundel Register, Pars II, 165a); *The Register of Archbishop Chichele*, ed. E. F. Jacob, ii, 96.

meantime Edmund had served the Crown in a variety of local offices: he had been a collector of tunnage and poundage and of the wool subsidy at Ipswich, had twice been sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk (in 1401–2 and 1413–4), three times escheator in these same counties (in 1405–6, 1411–2, and 1416–7), a J.P. in Cambridgeshire (in 1394) and in Norfolk (from 1406 to 1418), and five times M.P. for Norfolk (in the parliaments of October 1404, 1411, 1413, March 1416 and 1417).

William Oldhall did not, however, owe to his father the arrangement of his marriage with a niece of William Ufford, Earl of Suffolk. For, although there is evidence that William was married before 1423 to this lady—Margaret, a daughter of William Lord Willoughby K.G. of Eresby and sister of Robert Lord Willoughby K.G.—her first husband, Sir Thomas Skipwith, died early in 1418, shortly after the death of Edmund Oldhall.[13] This new family connection is bound to have been profitable, apart from the lands that the marriage brought into William Oldhall's control. William Lord Willoughby had died in 1410. But his son and heir, Robert, had a very active and eventful career: summoned to parliament between 1411 and his death in 1452, he shared in the expeditions for the conquest of France (in 1415 and 1417 and later) under Henry V, fought at Cravant and Verneuil (in 1423 and 1424), was in Normandy in 1426, on the Somme in 1433 (with 1,600 men under his command), in charge of the Paris garrison after the Congress of Arras in 1435 until he was forced to surrender the city in 1436, and was still in France (under the Duke of York) in 1442, when he defeated the French with great loss near Amiens. Lord Robert married, firstly, the sister of Thomas, Earl of Salisbury, and, secondly, a niece and coheir of Ralph Lord Cromwell. That the connection between Oldhall and Lord Willoughby was a close one is suggested by the fact that Willoughby in January 1431 had recently granted his brother-in-law and sister an annuity of £80 (chargeable on his lands in Norfolk and Suffolk) in return for funds which Oldhall had lent to or paid for him at need.[14]

So far as can be ascertained, William Oldhall did not take part in Henry V's expedition to Normandy in 1415, but the beginning of his long military career is not to be dated later than the following winter (of 1415–16) when his name heads a list of *homines ad arma equitantes* retained by the King's uncle, Thomas Beaufort, Earl of Dorset, for service at Harfleur, where, as soon as the place had surrendered in the previous September, Beaufort was appointed captain. At the end of February 1416 Beaufort was made Lieutenant of Normandy and in November following was created Duke of Exeter.

Henry V's second French expedition left England for Normandy in the summer of 1417. The Duke of Exeter did not join it until May 1418. But,

[13] *Paston Letters* (Library Edition), ed. Jas. Gardiner, vol. ii, p. 33; *CCR, 1435–41*, 476; *DKR*, XLVIII, 226. (In June, 1423, Oldhall is described as of South Ormesby, a Skipwith manor.)

[14] *Paston Letters, loc. cit.* (Robert Lord Willoughby and his sister, Oldhall's wife, were on their mother's side great-grandchildren of Edmund FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel.)

although he was a member of Exeter's company, Oldhall seems to have preceded the duke overseas and to have been in Normandy at the time of his father's death in the autumn of 1417. He was certainly present, as was the duke himself, at the long siege of Rouen, which surrendered early in 1419, and he was still a member of Exeter's retinue when on 1 and 6 June 1421 he took out royal "letters of protection" as about to return from England to France.[15] Clearly, Oldhall had crossed to England when Henry V himself came home early in this year, although Exeter had stayed on in France and had had the misfortune to take part in the battle of Baugé where his nephew, the Duke of Clarence, was killed and he himself captured.

The reason for Oldhall's brief interruption of his military service in France in 1421 was evidently trouble over part of his inheritance. According to the petition which William presented to the King in the parliament of May 1421, Edmund Oldhall had died about the time of All Saints 1417, he himself, the son and heir, being then (as before and since) overseas in the Duke of Exeter's retinue. Edmund had made no written will, and one William Shelton had applied successfully to the Archbishop of Canterbury for the administration of Edmund's property, had then represented to one of Edmund's feoffees-to-uses in the Norfolk manors of Narford and Bodney that the heir had died on military service overseas, had prevailed upon the feoffee to sell these estates to his nominees, and since then had fraudulently appropriated the revenues. No remedy—it was alleged by William Oldhall in his petition—lay at Common Law, and unless the King ordained remedy by authority of parliament, Oldhall stood to be disinherited. The formal answer to the petition was that Shelton should be summoned before the King for examination. The ultimate outcome can only have been favourable to Oldhall, for certainly later on he enjoyed possession of the lands in question.[16]

After this visit to England in 1421, William Oldhall, Esquire, returned to France and presumably rejoined Exeter's retinue, the Duke having now regained his freedom. But he seems to have been soon back in England where he may have remained for the time being. He was certainly in this country in October and November 1421, in February 1422 (when he stood surety in Chancery for Robert Lathbury, "gentleman," when the latter undertook to fulfil his indenture of military service with the King), and in July following (when he stood surety for Sir Edward Stradling regarding a grant of a royal wardship).[17] Nothing more is known of Oldhall until the summer of 1423, when on 1 June he took out royal "letters of attorney" and on 11 July following "letters of protection," as once more going abroad. He was again a member of the

[15] PRO, E101/47/39; *Rot. Parl.*, IV, 158b; *DKR*, XLIV, 627, 629; *Itinerarii Symonis Simeonis et Willelmi de Worcestre*, ed. J. Nasmith (Cambridge, 1788), "Itinerarium Willelmi de Worcestre," 370, 374.

[16] *Rot. Parl.*, IV, 158b; *Archaeologia*, XXXVII, 335–50.

[17] *CCR, 1419–22*, 220; *ibid., 1422–29*, 55; *ibid., 1419–22*, 227; *CFR, 1413–22*, 441.

Duke of Exeter's retinue,[18] but fought in the battle of Cravant on 31 July 1423 with the Earl of Salisbury's force, as did his brother-in-law, Lord Willoughby.[19] It was seemingly here that he was knighted.

The chivalry of England was no longer maintaining its previous interest in the French war, and there was now a correspondingly greater reward to be won by those who were still prepared to continue an overseas military career. Sir William Oldhall was one such, and he clearly soon established himself as one of the high-ranking military captains of the next two decades. In the spring of 1424 he was recruiting a large retinue of his own, comprising 44 men-at-arms and 135 archers, and on 29 May was advanced at the Lower Exchequer the sum of £616 odd for their next half-year's pay.[20] He took an active part in the important campaigns of this year's summer: a member of a force operating in eastern France in July under the Earl of Salisbury, he was at the taking of Ivry and Montsoer, being appointed constable of the latter place, and on 17 August he fought in the Duke of Bedford's great engagement at Verneuil (in Perche).[21] Oldhall's rapid emergence in these opening years of Henry VI's reign is most clearly attested by his appointment in the following November as Seneschal of Normandy, an office he held for just a year (until 16 November 1425).[22] In the course of 1425 he was engaged in the Earl of Salisbury's expedition into Anjou and Maine. In 1426 he was appointed captain of the castle of St. Laurence de Moitiers in Anjou, and about this time he was also made captain of Argentan and Essey.[23]

Because of a serious quarrel between the Duke of Gloucester and Bishop Beaufort of Winchester, in 1426 the Duke of Bedford was in England and acted as Protector. And during this year Oldhall was certainly for a time in England too. The Duke of Exeter, his old master, was in failing health and no longer very active (although he was still the chief of the guardians of the infant Henry VI), and already Oldhall was becoming more firmly attached to the Bedford group, a natural development in view of their main preoccupation with the military situation in France. It was probably owing to this growing association with the Regent of France (and heir-presumptive to the throne) that Sir William was included, along with Bedford's own Chamberlain of Household, Richard Wydeville, Esquire, in an embassy to Flanders that

[18] *DKR*, XLVIII, 225–6.

[19] *Wars of the English in France* (RS), ed. J. Stevenson, vol. ii, part ii, 385; J. Anstis, *Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, 170; *BIHR*, XVIII, 39; BM, Harleian Ms. no. 782, fo. 51.

[20] *DKR*, XLVIII, 230; Warrants for issue, PRO E404/40/188; Exchequer, Issue Roll, PRO, E403/666, mem. 4.

[21] *Archaeologia*, XXXVII, *loc. cit.*; C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*, App., p. 321 (The Latin Brut); *Itinerarium Willelmi de Worcestre*, *op. cit.*, 161, 282; *Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles* (Camden Society, 1880), ed. J. Gairdner, p. 164; *Wars of the English in France*, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, part ii, p. 394; J. Anstis, *Register of the Order of the Garter*, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

[22] *BIHR*, *loc. cit.*; *Archaeologia*, XXXVII, *loc. cit.*

[23] *Wars of the English in France*, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, part ii, p. 412; J. Anstis, *loc. cit.*; *Archaeologia*, *loc. cit.*

was presumably designed to bring about a betterment of relations between the Duke of Burgundy and his cousin, Jacqueline of Hainault, the wife of the Duke of Gloucester. For Duke Humphrey's support of his wife's claims in Hainault was threatening to undermine the Anglo-Burgundian alliance, upon which English success in France, military and political, depended. On 17 July 1426 Oldhall was advanced £50 at the Lower Exchequer, by warrant of the royal Council, to enable him to take part in an embassy to the Duke of Burgundy and the Duchess of Gloucester, expressly, *pro certis materiis eisdem ducisse et duci ex parte ipsius domini Regis exponendis*, alias, *pro certis negociis rem puplicam* [sic] *ipsius domini Regis et regni sui maxime concernentibus*. With an escort of 41 horsemen, Oldhall and his fellow-envoys left London on 1 August 1426. They did not return before 10 October following, having had long to wait for an answer to their proposals. Twenty years later, Oldhall was still owed £24 8s. for his additional expenses.[24] The diplomatic results of the enterprise have not been discovered.

All that is known of Sir William Oldhall in 1427 is that on 11 March he and his wife (Margaret) received a papal indult to have a portable altar.[25] But at this time he was probably back in France with the Regent, Bedford. In May 1428 he assisted John Lord Talbot in the rescue of Le Mans. It was perhaps in October of this year that he was sent by the Council of Normandy to strengthen Argentan, after news had come in that there was to be an attempt to betray the place to the Duke of Alençon.[26]

How highly at this time Bedford valued Oldhall as a support for his efforts to maintain and extend the English Conquest across the Channel, is suggested by part of a *detail* which the Regent put together sometime between February and April 1429. The despatch was intended to serve as a guide in the event of elections being made to the Order of the Garter, and Bedford catalogued the military actions of no more than five knights then employed in France under his command. In this communication Oldhall is mentioned as having been knighted in 1423 at the battle of Carence (Cravant?), where he proved himself a good knight, and as having fought at Verneuil (in 1424), served continually on the frontiers of the conquered areas in Anjou and Maine (in 1425), and assisted Lord Talbot at Le Mans (in 1428). One special exploit was noticed in his favour: he had once ridden with 3 *speres* and 14 *bowes* from one fortress to another, his men, when ambushed by 20 French men-at-arms (without mention of others), having killed 14 men-at-arms, taken 9 prisoners, and *discomfited* the rest.[27] Nothing came of the recommendations, so far as Oldhall was concerned.

[24] Issue Roll, PRO, E403/675 mem. 9; E403/765, mem. 4; Exchequer,, Accounts Various, E101/322/14; Enrolled Foreign Accounts, E364/60; *PPC*, iii, 201, 244.
[25] *Cal. of Papal Registers, Papal Letters*, VII, 551.
[26] J. Anstis, *loc. cit.*; *Wars of the English in France*, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, part i, p. 85.
[27] J. Anstis, *loc. cit.*

In view of the absence of any record showing him to have been in England, it may fairly be presumed that for most of the time between 1429 and June 1433 (at the earliest) Sir William Oldhall was on Bedford's staff in France. In these four years nothing certain is known of him, except that on 6 July 1431 he and his wife received from Eugenius IV another papal indult to have a portable altar and a privilege granting them a plenary indulgence.[28] When Bedford returned to England in June 1433 (after an absence of six years), Oldhall possibly returned with him. But it is not until April 1434 that we are afforded any record of Sir William's presence in England: he was then summoned to a Great Council which met at Westminster between 24 April and 8 May 1434.[29] During the proceedings, Gloucester questioned his brother Bedford's conduct of the French war and himself offered to serve instead; the offer was rejected on financial grounds, and Bedford, after justifying his policy in France, went overseas again in July. Oldhall either accompanied or soon followed him: on 12 July, as proceeding to Normandy, he procured royal "letters of general attorney."[30]

In 1435 occurred the three-fold disaster, so far as English interests in France were concerned, of the failure of the Congress of Arras, the ensuing withdrawal of Burgundy from the English alliance, and, on 14 September 1435, the death at Rouen of the Duke of Bedford. It is most probable that Oldhall, who by this time was a knight-banneret, now came home again to England for a space: on 5 December following he and some others (including Sir John and Sir Robert Clifton who had both been with him as *logeyng felowys* at the siege of Rouen in 1418–9, and of whom the former had since served with Bedford in France) were given a year's custody of the Norfolk manor of Newton-by-Castle Acre; and, in Hilary term 1436, he and his second cousin, Richard Bozon, were plaintiffs in a suit in the Court of Common Pleas against the prior of the house of Austin canons at Pentney (Norfolk) over the manor of West Bilney.[31]

It was about this time (in January 1436) that Richard, Duke of York, was appointed to follow Bedford in controlling and defending what was left of the English conquests in France. When York crossed the Channel, Paris had just been surrendered by Oldhall's brother-in-law, Lord Willoughby, and a great part of Normandy had been recovered by the French. It is very likely that Oldhall agreed to continue to serve with York as he had done under his predecessor: certainly, on 1 November 1436 Oldhall was granted royal "letters of attorney" as leaving the country, and nearly a year later, on 24 October 1437, by which time York had been superseded by the Earl of Warwick, Oldhall was granted "letters of protection" as being then about to go to Bayeux.[32] His service overseas was evidently punctuated by occasional

[28] *Cal. of Papal Registers, Papal Letters*, VIII, 365–6.
[29] *PPC*, IV, 212.
[30] *DKR*, XLVIII, 298; T. Carte, *Rolles Gascons etc.*, ii, 280.
[31] *CFR, 1430–37*, 256; *The Genealogist*, N.S., XVII, 249.
[32] *DKR*, XLVIII, 315, 320.

reappearances in England as before: he was, for example, one of those five "professional" soldiers who attended a great council of Lords called to Westminster on 24 February 1439 to discuss the war. Another of the five knights was Sir John Popham, soon to be a member of York's council, and a third was Sir Henry Inglose, a Norfolk neighbour of Oldhall's and a former Deputy-Admiral of Bedford's, for whose daily appearance in Chancery (pending a dispute with the abbot of St. Benet's, Hulme) Oldhall was to enter bail on 15 May following.[33]

In 1439 and 1440 the military rear-guard action in France continued, as did diplomatic exchanges. On 2 July 1440 York was once again appointed as the King's Lieutenant-General in France and Normandy (in succession to the Earl of Somerset), this time for five years. He did not, however, cross the Channel until June 1441, by which time enemy successes had reduced the English council at Rouen to despair. Sir William Oldhall was now a member of the Duke's *chieff councelle* in Normandy, and his own indentured retinue numbered no fewer than 42 lances and 146 archers, a force slightly larger than he had produced in 1424.[34] His connection with the Duke of York was already on a more than purely military basis: along with two other members of the Duke's military council, Sir John Fastolf and Sir William ap Thomas (as well as with Bishop Alnwick of Lincoln, Viscount Beaumont, and Lord Cromwell), Oldhall had been made one of the Duke's feoffees-to-uses in over ten manors or vills in Dorset, Gloucestershire, Suffolk, Essex, and Surrey, and lands in East Anglia, whose conveyance had been authorized by letters patent for which the Duke had petitioned the King on 16 March 1441[35]; and, exactly two months later (on 16 May 1441), Oldhall himself secured a licence under the Great Seal regularizing his tenure of the manors of Standon and Plashes (Herts), Hambledon (Bucks), and Swancombe (Kent), which the Duke had granted him for life. It is probable that York also gave Oldhall those estates in Ireland which he was certainly holding by July 1444.[36]

One chronicle account of this time criticized York's inactivity in his first period of office as Lieutenant-General of France and Normandy in 1436–7, ascribing it to the fears of his counsellors for his personal safety.[37] Now, in 1441, two other sets of annals were doing the same: one complained, however, that the Duke, young himself, was ruled by young men's counsel, the other that he was governed by Oldhall's counsel: incompatible opinions, in view of

[33] *PPC*, V, 108; *CCR, 1435–41*, 274.

[34] *Wars of the English, op. cit.*, vol. ii, part ii, 585; PRO, E101/53/33.

[35] *PPC*, V, 136.

[36] *CPR, 1436–41*, 531; *ibid., 1441–6*, 273. (Oldhall was granted on 23 July 1444 a royal patent licensing his absence from Ireland and allowing the administration of his estates there through bailiffs who were allowed to send all the profits to him, presumably to France if need be.)

[37] *Incerti scriptoris chronicon Anglie de regnis trium regum Lancastrensium* (London, 1848), ed. J. A. Giles: *Chronicon Henrici VI*, p. 18.

Oldhall's age and experience.[38] But of the Duke's lack of success in 1441, there can be no doubt: the English lost their last hold on the Ile de France; and there were further reverses in Normandy itself. Certainly in 1442 a singular lack of initiative was shown, and for this real or pretended reason the Duke of Somerset was given military control in Guienne and in other areas of France not actually under York's control. York formally protested, but, unfortunately for his case, Dieppe had been added to the places recently wrested from the English, even before Somerset crossed the Channel. Doubtless the farce of Somerset's campaign of 1442–3 was some consolation to York and his council. But negotiations for peace were continuing: in 1443 they received an added impulse with the proposal for a marriage between Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou, a niece of Charles VII's Queen; in 1444, after the royal betrothal, a truce for two years was agreed; and in 1445 Queen Margaret came to England. York had conducted her to the Normandy coast; he was himself in this year negotiating with Charles VII for the marriage of his heir with Charles's infant daughter; and at home in England, in parliament in June 1445, one of his foremost supporters, William Burley, in his capacity as the Commons' Speaker, was congratulating the Marquis of Suffolk on his successes in diplomacy. York seems not to have had much difficulty in accepting the inevitable. He himself came home at the end of 1445.

In these years of York's absence overseas—from 1441 to 1445—nothing substantial is known of the part which Oldhall played in military matters in France, and but little regarding any other of his affairs.[39] It is evident, however, that he remained a very influential member of the Duke of York's council at Rouen, and that the ties between the two men were becoming very intimate. It would appear that, hardly later than the beginning of 1444, Oldhall had been appointed by the Duke as his Chamberlain: to about this time is almost certainly to be attributed a signet letter from Henry VI to York in which the Duke was asked to spare for a time the services of his Chamberlain, Sir William Oldhall, so as to enable the latter to cross to England and, regarding *the treete that is now at hand to be made betwix us and our uncle of France*, advise the King and Council *in such things as shalbe occurrent and touche our Reaume of France and Duchie of Normandie, as he that of reason shuld have mooste perfite knowlege in the same, considering his longe abode with you there, and of your*

[38] C. L. Kingsford, *op. cit.*, App. VI, pp. 339, 341. (The name given is Sir *John* Oldhall, but there is no other mention of anyone of this name, and the name *John* must be regarded as a slip for *William*, for Sir William Oldhall was certainly a member of York's council in Normandy in 1441.)

[39] On 24 July 1443 Oldhall and his wife received a papal indult to have low mass celebrated by their own priest before daybreak or early in the afternoon, if their business required it, without blame attaching to them or the priest (a peculiar practice, but one enjoyed by the Carmelites), and on 17 August, in another papal privilege, their confessor was authorized to dispense them from the requirement not to eat flesh-meats in Lent or on other days of prohibition (*Papal Letters*, *op. cit.*, IX, 369, 374).

Conseil.[40] In July 1446, after York's return to England, Oldhall was still a member of his council and, expressly as his Chamberlain, attested one of his deeds on 28 February 1447, that is, during the parliament of Bury St. Edmunds.[41] This was only four days after the mysterious death of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, that die-hard opponent of a compromise-peace with France, following his arrest by members of the royal Household. York came into some of Gloucester's estates and offices, and, had there not been a more eminent candidate available for the late Duke's stall in the chapel of the Order of the Garter at Windsor (namely, King Alfonso V of Portugal), Sir William Oldhall himself might conceivably have filled it; certainly, in the next chapter of the Order, held on the eve of the patronal feast (22 April 1447), Oldhall was the first of the Duke of York's three nominees for election to the vacancy.[42]

Perhaps it was about this time that Oldhall bought from his lord of York the manor of Hunsdon, where he now began to build and castellate on a considerable scale: the height of the *turris manerii* was over 100 feet, and the principal hall 80 feet by 24; and William of Worcester, Sir John Fastolf's secretary (who is the source of these details), had it from a member of Oldhall's wardrobe-staff that the works cost in the neighbourhood of 7,000 marks (£4,666 odd). These extensive building operations can only have been retarded by the later vicissitudes of Oldhall's career, and they were not, in fact, to be completed by him.[43] In this same year, on 28 October 1447, he was granted by York a lease for life (rent-free) of the meadow, pasture, and castle-garden on the Duke's estate at Clare in the valley of the Stour, roughly half-way between Oldhall's main Norfolk properties and his newer acquisitions in south-east Hertfordshire: they were worth 46 shillings a year.[44]

Of Oldhall's activities in 1448, nothing is known. In the autumn of 1447 his master, York, had been mortified by the success of the Marquis of Dorset, Edmund Beaufort, Cardinal Beaufort's nephew, in securing the Lieutenancy of France, for which York had competed, and by the way in which, at this same time, he himself was being shuffled off into the wings of the stage by his appointment as Lieutenant of Ireland for a ten years' term, an appointment tantamount to exile. He made a hard bargain of the terms of his office and, moreover, delayed his departure for a year and a half. On 20 February 1449 Oldhall took out royal "letters of protection" valid for a year, as going in York's company to Ireland; and in July of this year, when York eventually crossed the Irish Sea, Oldhall presumably sailed with him.[45]

[40] *Letters of Queen Margaret of Anjou, Bishop Beckington and others*, ed. C. Munro (Camden Society, 1863), p. 70.
[41] *PPC*, VI, 52; *CPR, 1446–52*, 231.
[42] J. Anstis, *Register, op. cit.*, 132–3. (York's other nominees were Sir Andrew Ogard and Sir William Bonville.)
[43] *Itinerarium Willelmi de Worcestre, op. cit.*, 88; *Archaeologia*, XXXVII, *loc. cit.*
[44] Westminster Abbey Muniments, no. 12165. (This account refers to Oldhall as the Duke's Chamberlain.)
[45] *CPR, 1446–52*, 233.

At this time Oldhall's connections with important soldiers who had served either with the Duke of Bedford or the Duke of York (or with both) were securing him feoffeeships-to-uses on many sides: by 1450 he was, for example, a trustee of estates belonging to Sir John Fastolf (for the eventual performance of his will),[46] to Sir Andrew Ogard, a Danish knight, once Chamberlain to Bedford but now a member of York's council,[47] to Sir Edmund Mulsho, another member of York's council,[48] to Sir John Clifton of Old Buckenham, once a retainer of Bedford's,[49] and to John Flegge, Esquire, another retainer of York's.[50] Oldhall, as well as being the Duke of York's Chamberlain, was still of course one of his feoffees-to-uses and remained so until his death.[51] York and his retainers were clearly a compact and closely interdependent group of men.

In the summer or early autumn of 1449—during this "last act" of the French war—the castle and fortress of La Ferté (at the mouth of the Somme), of which Oldhall was *seigneur*, was among those many places that fell to the French when Charles VII seized the opportunity to declare war afforded him by the sack of Fougères, a *débacle* which culminated in the surrender of Rouen itself at the beginning of November 1449.[52] On 12 August 1450, when Cherbourg fell, an end was put to English rule in northern France (save at Calais).

Earlier in the year, when England was seething with indignation at the rapid adverse turn of events abroad, the Duke of Suffolk had first been impeached in parliament and then murdered on his way to exile, and Archbishop Stafford of Canterbury had given place at the Chancery (after an eighteen years' custody of the Great Seal) to Archbishop Kemp of York. In June and July 1450 Jack Cade's rising in Kent, Surrey, and Sussex gave a new form and direction to the general disgust at the government's ineptitude; and whether York, who was all this time in Ireland, was or was not behind this movement, "the Yorkists considered Cade's cause their own" (Ramsay). Certainly, the rebels demanded Duke Richard's recall. York needed no recalling: he came.

With the King childless and his administration discredited, for York to be given control of the government (as he most probably intended) would be hazardous in the extreme for the Court, especially in view of his claims to the Crown. If the claims of Edmund Beaufort, now Duke of Somerset, as heir-male of John of Gaunt, were seriously considered—assuming the continued childlessness of the royal pair—York's position would be equally perilous, despite his strong backing in the nobility, especially among the Nevilles. Returning from Ireland, York landed at Beaumaris in North Wales, late in August or early in September 1450. Oldhall had very probably been with

[46] *HMC Report, MSS. of Marquess of Lothian*, 54; *CPR, 1446–52*, 301, 314.
[47] *ibid.*, 112; *Calendar of Charter Rolls, 1427–1516*, 38; *VCH, Herts.*, iii, 370.
[48] *CPR, 1461–7*, 180.
[49] *CCR, 1454–61*, 91.
[50] *CPR, 1461–7*, 45.
[51] *Somerset Record Society*, xxii (Feet of Fines, Henry IV–VI), 113, 201; Westminster Abbey Muniments, no. 12168.
[52] *Wars of the English in France, op. cit.*, vol. ii, part ii, p. 622.

him in Ireland recently, having renewed his royal "letters of protection" as late as April 1450.[53] It was later asserted by the Lancastrians, however, that he had given help to Jack Cade.[54] This is most likely true, but it is all but certain just the same that he went to Ireland in the summer of 1450 and re-crossed to England in York's retinue. For when, soon after his return and with an army at his back, the Duke forced his way into the royal palace at Westminster, he complained in an audience with the King of attempts to arrest him at his landing made by a groom of the King's Chamber, *which* [who] *had in charge . . . to take me and put me into your castell of Conwaie and* [also] *to strike off the head of Sir William Oldhall*, as well as to imprison two others of his retinue, Sir Walter Devereux and Sir Edmund Mulsho.[55] It was then, on the occasion of this protest, that the King agreed to the Duke of York's being included in a newly constituted royal Council. There can be no doubt of Oldhall's participation in the Duke's *coup*. When, over a year-and-a-half later, in Easter term 1452, following the failure of York's *putsch* at Dartford, the political pendulum had swung decisively in favour of the Court party, and legal proceedings began to be taken in the Court of King's Bench against York's supporters for some of their actions in 1450, a jury was to present that at Westminster on 27 September 1450 Sir William Oldhall of Hunsdon, *pro magnificencia et exaltacione dicti Willelmi*, had plotted the death of the King and to bring about discord between him and the lords, and between the lords and men assembled for rising in war against the King.[56]

Of Oldhall's pre-eminence in York's counsels at this moment, there can be little question. In a letter of 6 October 1450, in which Justice Yelverton's clerk wrote to John Paston that the Duke had applied to the King by bill to have a number of his opponents (who had been indicted) arrested without option of bail, it was told how Oldhall had had an affable conversation with the King (at Westminster, on 5 October) which had lasted *more thenne to* [two] *houres*. Henry VI had there and then asked Oldhall—the letter stated—to speak to and secure the favour of the Duke for John Penycok, one of his own Esquires of the Body who had been denounced by the Kentish rebels in the previous June, with the object of ensuring that the Duke's tenantry would permit Penycok's bailiffs to collect rents from such of his lands as lay among the Duke's own lordships. Oldhall seemingly put the King off by saying that York's tenants would disobey any such instructions; the temper of the *western men* was such, Oldhall added for good measure, that when he himself had intervened to protect Lord Hoo from their hands at a meeting between this ex-Chancellor of France and York near St. Albans, it was only at the risk of his own life.

[53] *CPR, 1446–52*, 324–5.
[54] *Rot. Parl.*, V, 265b.
[55] Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London, 1808), vol. iii, 231.
[56] Coram Rege Roll, PRO, K.B. 27/777, Rex roll, mem. 7v.

Another of those of the Court group who in the autumn of 1450 still stood to lose much by the new turn of events was Sir Thomas Tuddenham of Oxburgh (Norfolk). A close adherent of the late Duke of Suffolk, Tuddenham had been an object of Cade's hostility and in June 1450 had lost his office as Keeper of the Great Wardrobe of the Household. But, although since then he had been indicted, he still held on to his posts in the administrative system of the Duchy of Lancaster, in which he was Chief Steward north of Trent and (jointly with John Heydon, a Norfolk lawyer and another official who was suspect to the Yorkists) Steward in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. According to the letter of Justice Yelverton's clerk of 6 October, both these men were then working through the Yorkist lawyers, William Burley and Thomas Young, to have Oldhall's "good lordship," and were prepared to *profyr more thanne to* [two] *thousand pownde* in order to secure it. It was in just this situation that, in another letter to John Paston, who was personally embroiled with Tuddenham and Heydon in Norfolk, Paston and others were advised to wait on the Duke of York when he moved from Walsingham to Norwich, to *cherse* [cherish] *and wirchep well Sir William Oldhalle*, and to *spende sum what of your good* [wealth] *now and gette yow lordshep and frendship ther, quia ibi pendet tota lex et prophetae.* Thomas Lord Scales, who had assisted the government against Cade in London in the previous June and was a fairly sound loyalist, had already come to know where he also could best make headway: the letter of 6 October stated that he and Oldhall *arne made fredys*. Sir Thomas Tuddenham apparently had no such luck: sometime in November 1450 Justice Yelverton was alleging in correspondence that Tuddenham had been telling *the falsest tales* of Oldhall and himself; not surprisingly, Yelverton gave it as his opinion that *it wer ful necessarye and profitable to the Kyng and to his pepil for to have othir officers in his duche* [of Lancaster].[57]

Apparently even before York thrust himself into the presence of Henry VI at Westminster and forcibly secured appointment as a member of the royal Council, parliament had been summoned (on 5 September 1450) to meet on 6 November following. In the interval York and his friends busied themselves in influencing local elections to parliament, especially in the shires where their authority was likely to be an important factor. At Bury St. Edmunds on 16 October, York arranged with his wife's nephew, the Duke of Norfolk, who should be knights of the shire for the two East Anglian counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. Already on the previous day (15 October), the county court of Hertfordshire had met at Cheshunt, and here, for the first time, Oldhall had been elected as knight of the shire. In East Anglia the Yorkist nominations had not been altogether successful. But, when parliament assembled on 6 November, Oldhall found himself one of a respectably sized group of at least ten shire-knights whose Yorkist attachments were already clearly defined: from Suffolk had been returned Sir Roger Chamberlain and Sir Edmund

[57] *Paston Letters* (Library Edition, 1904), ed. Jas. Gardiner, vol. ii, p. 174, 176, 180, 191.

Mulsho; Thomas Mulsho, Edmund's brother, was one of the Northants knights; Henry Gray from Norfolk was a Mowbray candidate; from Herefordshire and Shropshire in the Welsh Marches, where York's influence was naturally and directly powerful, came respectively Sir Walter Devereux and William Burley the lawyer, both retainers of the Duke; one of the Yorkshire knights was Sir John Savile of Thornhill near Wakefield; Robert Poynings, Esquire, elected by Sussex, had been sword-bearer to Cade in the recent revolt; and William Haute, another sympathiser with Cade, was shire-knight for Kent. And from Bristol, whose trade with Gascony was going to be hard-hit if that province followed Normandy into French hands, were returned the Yorkist lawyer, Thomas Young, and his half-brother, William Canynges, the greatest of the merchants of the port.

There must have been many more who were favourable to York's claim to be included in the government and also hostile to the Court party (especially to the Duke of Somerset), but who were yet not so strictly bound to York's support as this nucleus of known retainers and political sympathisers. For, without doubt, York enjoyed the backing of the parliamentary Commons. This much may be inferred from their election and presentation (on 9 November 1450) of his Chamberlain, Oldhall, to be their Speaker, over a week before York and his nephew, the Duke of Norfolk, themselves came up with their great retinues to Westminster.

The first session of the parliament ran until a week short of Christmas (18 December), the second from 20 January 1451 to 29 March, and the third and final session from the fifth to sometime during the last week of May following. Presumably York's arrival on 18 November was a signal for greater parliamentary activity, and to the weeks between then and the adjournment for Christmas is probably to be attributed the initiation of the most striking proposals and acts of the parliament: the Bill of Attainder against the dead Duke of Suffolk, which the King refused; the unsuccessful attack on the Dowager Duchess of Suffolk, who was a second cousin to the Duke of Somerset; the bill for the removal from the verge of the Household of a number of persons who had misbehaved about the King, the Duke of Somerset at their head, a bill from which the King removed the sting by excluding Somerset, such other peers as were named, and any who waited on his person; and the bill for an Act of Resumption of royal grants since the beginning of the reign in 1422. This first session also saw a "great division" between York and Somerset: on 1 December an attempt was made to arrest Somerset and, although the Duke himself escaped, his house and, on the next day, the houses of Thomas Lord Hoo and Sir Thomas Tuddenham were plundered. In the spoiling of Somerset's property at the London Blackfriars, Oldhall himself seems to have taken a hand. What is more, in Easter term 1452 Oldhall was indicted in the King's Bench of having, on that very same day (1 December 1450), incited men of Kent and others to kill the lords and

magnates, so that, in the great hall of pleas of the King (Westminster Hall), the courts of King's Bench, Chancery, Common Bench, and Exchequer openly sitting, they committed their treasons and felonies "to the final destruction of these courts and of the laws and customs of the land," appearing there arrayed in manner of war and shouting, "Justice, justice."[58]

Something of a revulsion of feeling in favour of the Court seems to have occurred during, if not even before, the Christmas recess. Cade had been posthumously attainted of treason, and on 14 December York himself received a commission to try the rebels of the previous summer in Kent and Sussex, a "harvest of heads" being the result. Somerset was not only soon appointed Captain of Calais, but clearly regained some measure of control: in February 1451 his friend Abbot Bowlers of Gloucester, who, a member of the royal Council until the recent changes, had been imprisoned by York at Ludlow, was now preferred to the vacant see of Hereford, a diocese in York's own peculiar sphere of influence in the March of Wales. When, during the third session of the parliament, perhaps as a last and reckless throw by the Yorkists, Thomas Young, the lawyer-burgess for Bristol, moved in the Lower House for the recognition of the Duke of York as heir to the throne (a motion perhaps more particularly directed against Somerset than at the childless King), parliament was immediately brought to a close, and Young committed to the Tower. The parliament clearly had settled nothing to York's advantage.

Of Oldhall's Speakership, or rather of the manipulative and managerial services which as Speaker he performed in the Yorkist interest during the parliament, nothing precise is known. He had perhaps used his influence to further certain private matters, for example, a Chancery suit against the Crown brought in December 1450 by himself and other feoffees of Sir John Clifton, a cousin of Lord Cromwell and the father-in-law of Sir Andrew Ogard, a member of York's private council; the suit went in the feoffees' favour in Easter term 1451, the estates in question having been meanwhile committed to their custody.[59] And Oldhall also seems to have secured for himself the Duchy of Lancaster office of Steward of the honour of Clare in Suffolk in this year.[60] However, he must soon have lost it. For, in the next two years, the political pendulum swung away from the Yorkist interest.

Early in 1452 York was back where he had been at the time of his return from Ireland in 1450: solemnly insisting on his loyalty, but prepared to use armed force to get a hearing in order to state his case. On 1 March 1452 he and his private army were at Dartford, threatening the capital; but he was outwitted and disbanded his men and, instead of the Duke of Somerset being arrested to stand trial (as he demanded), York found himself a prisoner, although the Council let him go after certain undertakings.

[58] Coram Rege Roll, PRO, K.B. 27/777, Rex roll, mem. 7v.
[59] *CPR, 1454–61*, 91; *CFR, 1445–54*, 184.
[60] *DKR*, XLIII, 317.

Oldhall was privy to the Yorkist movements of disaffection which reached this culmination. In Easter term 1452 he was indicted in the Court of King's Bench of assembling with other traitors on 20 July 1451, again in the great hall of the palace of Westminster, of intending to rise in rebellion in mid-September following and come to the King's presence to take and rule him and the kingdom *ad eorum libitum* (so the charge ran), and of conspiring how to deprive him of his crown and royal power and secure possession of the Great Seal. Again, in Michaelmas term 1452, at Peterborough, before the Earl of Wiltshire and other justices investigating cases of treason in Northants, a jury presented an indictment of Oldhall and others, describing how at Fotheringhay on 11 November 1451 they had met to encompass the King's death by war and discord, had conspired to depose him, and how to this end, arrayed in manner of war, they had risen against their allegiance in favour of the Duke of York. A week or so before this incident, on 3 November 1451 at Hunsdon —according to an indictment laid before the Duke of Somerset on 16 October 1452 at Hitchen (Herts)—Oldhall had been promoting a rising of Hertfordshire men which came to a head at Hitchen on 20 February 1452.[61]

It was not long after this that, on 23 November 1451, Oldhall had entered the sanctuary of the royal chapel of St. Martin-le-Grand in London. Here he remained, except for brief intervals, until after the Yorkist victory in the first battle of St. Albans in 1455. Attempts to have him removed were made by Lancastrian agents, but these attempts failed on account of the Dean of St. Martin's determination to preserve the sanctuary rights of his church. Certain of Somerset's party actually broke into the sanctuary on 18 January 1452 and abducted Oldhall to Westminster. The Dean, however, pressed for his return and, after Oldhall had been detained for two days, obtained it[62]. But, according to an indictment presented in the King's Bench in Easter term 1452, Oldhall was able to help prepare the abortive Yorkist rising of February 1452: a jury presented that on 27 February 1452 at Westminster he had conspired to excite a rising in order to take possession of the Great Seal and discharge the Chancellor, and that on the following day a thousand men accordingly came together at Hounslow with banners unfurled (*cum vexillis apertis*) and levied war in the field. It was only a day later that York was outwitted at Dartford into disbanding the main body of his forces.

As is made clear in the Bill of Attainder preferred against Oldhall in the Reading parliament of 1453, he was not himself in the field with the Duke of York at Dartford. He was alleged in the bill, however, to have aided and counselled those who were. And, even after this failure, he was soon once

[61] Coram Rege Roll, PRO, K.B. 27/777, Rex roll, mem. 7. (The occurrences at Fotheringhay are dated in the roll as taking place on 11 November 1450, but on 9 November 1450 Oldhall was presented at Westminster as Speaker. The events fit better the circumstances of the following year, and the regnal year of the record is doubtless a slip.

[62] *EHR*, XXV (1910), C. E. Johnston, "Sir William Oldhall," pp. 717–8; A. J. Kempe, *Historical Notices of the Collegiate Church of St. Martin-le-Grand, London* (1825), pp. 140–4.

again active in the Duke's interest: according to an indictment in the King's Bench (on 19 May) he was plottiag nt Westminster on 12 April 1452 to raise the Welsh March, for which treason one of his fellow-conspirators, John Sharp, Esquire, of Brentford, who immediately went off to Ludlow to put the plan into action, was convicted and hanged at Tyburn a year later.[63] After the Dartford business, the King issued a proclamation promising a general pardon in honour of Good Friday (6 April), and York and many of his supporters, Oldhall among them, availed themselves of it. But the pardon only extended to offences committed before Good Friday, and Oldhall had offended after that date. It was doubtless for this reason that pleas in the King's Bench were entered against him in the Easter term. On 27 June Oldhall was allowed to produce in Chancery a dozen sureties (mainly London citizens) prepared to offer bail in £100 for his good behaviour. But the pardon he had taken out would seem to have been rescinded or ignored, because about this time the King's half-brother, Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, got a grant of all his landed estates.[64] Oldhall himself appears to have now remained in sanctuary. It was probably on this account that, on 29 August 1452, he was granted a safe-conduct under the Great Seal to communicate with John Lord Beauchamp of Powick.[65]

However, in Michaelmas term following, as has been seen, criminal proceedings were resumed against him, and, after he had been once more indicted of treason-felony in the Court of the King's Bench, and a writ of exigent had been issued against him on 25 November 1452, he was outlawed in March 1453. As he was to plead when (in Trinity term 1455) he secured a reversal of these proceedings, at the time of his outlawry he was "in prison" in the custody of two yeomen of the Crown, that is to say, in sanctuary under the guard of royal officers responsible for preventing his escape.[66] In the meantime, on 13 December 1452, an esquire of the royal Household, Walter Burgh (M.P. for Downton in 1450–1), who, in January 1452, had been "beaten up" by three unknown men in the London streets (by Oldhall's connivance, as it was believed at Court) for accusing Oldhall of stealing the Duke of Somerset's goods during the pillage of December 1450, had been granted all the arrears of some Lincolnshire rents due to Oldhall from his step-son, Sir William Skipwith, the arrears of a yearly fee of £80 which Oldhall had been given (for life) by his late brother-in-law, Lord Willoughby, and also all his goods and chattels, including stocks of brick and timber at Oldhall's places in Hertfordshire (Hunsdon, Eastwick, and Pishobury) and Norfolk, the whole of which money and property was stated to be forfeit to the King on account of Oldhall's treason. It was on 25 March 1453, towards the close of the first session of the parliament which met early in that month at Reading (away from the possibility of interference

[63] PRO, K.B. 27/768, Rex roll, mem. 7.
[64] *CCR, 1447–54*, 363; *CPR, 1446–52*, 557.
[65] *CPR, 1446–52*, 569.
[66] PRO, K.B. 27/777, Rex roll, mem. 3; *EHR, op. cit.*, p. 718.

from the citizens of London), that the Earl of Pembroke received a (presumably) confirmatory concession to him and his heirs of all Oldhall's real estate and feudal rights. On 6 May, early in the second session of the parliament (now at Westminster), there was excluded from the forfeiture the two contiguous manors of Little Ryburgh and Stibbard (Norfolk) which Oldhall had released in frankalmoign to the Augustinian priory of Walsingham two years before; on 24 May following, the Duke of Somerset, in a grant to him and his heirs, acquired the manors of Hunsdon and East Wick (Herts); and on 23 June the manor of Bodney (Norfolk) was released to the Augustinian house at Thetford, which was stated to have purchased the place from Oldhall long ago before ever he committed treason.[67]

A proceeding calculated to regularize Oldhall's forfeiture had just been initiated in parliament on 22 June 1453 (during the second session). This had taken the form of a Bill of Attainder presented by the Commons. The Lower House, where there was a sitting a goodly sample of men of the royal Household, and whose composition was heavily weighted towards the Lancastrians, had requested that all ungranted petitions presented in the parliament of 1450–1 should be put into oblivion as purposed against God and Conscience and the Kings Regality and unreasonable. The Commons now proceeded against the ex-Speaker himself, asking that, in consideration of his *fals, cursed, and trayterours disposition*, as exemplified by his undutiful and faithless conduct in supporting Jack Cade and other traitors and giving counsel and aid to those in the field at Dartford, he should be attainted of high treason by parliamentary authority and incur forfeiture, saving any grants of his properties already made or to be made by the King.[68] Needless to say, the bill passed.

Some prospect of a turn for the better in Sir William Oldhall's affairs came in the following year: at Westminster, on 27 March 1454, during the third and last session of the parliament of 1453–4, the Duke of York, contrary to the Queen's aim to be Regent for as long as Henry VI was incapacitated by his mental illness, was chosen by the Lords as Protector. Since just before Christmas 1453, the Duke of Somerset had been in the Tower, awaiting trial, and he remained in custody until March 1455. But by Christmas 1454, when the King recovered his faculties, York's Protectorate had already ended, and, although Oldhall had secured a writ of error in the previous October to begin the process of the annulment of his outlawry, evidently there had not been time to procure his rehabilitation at law, and so he remained in sanctuary.[69]

In the first few months of 1455 Richard of York found himself once more utterly excluded from any share in the government, so that he and the Nevilles gave vent to their exasperation by again taking up arms. The result was the first battle of St. Albans of 22 May 1455, in which Somerset was killed. York was now appointed Constable of England, and with his friends he assumed

[67] *CPR, 1452–61*, 34, 111, 75, 103, 102.
[68] *Rot. Parl.*, V, 265.
[69] *EHR, op. cit.*, p. 719.

control of the administration. Oldhall's situation almost immediately changed complexion. In the next week or so, York's nephew by marriage, Richard Neville, the young Earl of Warwick, with Somerset's heir in his custody, was at Oldhall's place at Hunsdon, awaiting the meeting of parliament, and, as a letter to Sir John Fastolf's secretary (William Worcester) stated, Oldhall *abydeth no lenger in Seyntwery* [sanctuary] *than the Chef Juge* [Fortescue, C.J.,K.B.] *come, for that tyme he shal goo at large and sewe all his maters himself.* Oldhall did, in fact, surrender himself to the King's Bench in the Octave of Trinity (1–8 June). His case was re-opened on a writ of error; his plea—that in the earlier process of outlawry between November 1452 and March 1453 he had been forcibly detained in sanctuary and had therefore been unable to appear to defend himself—was admitted by the King's Attorney-General and the coroner of the Court under instructions from the Council; his outlawry was quashed; and before June gave way to July he had been acquitted on all the charges brought up in 1452. Two days before parliament met on 9 July, William Worcester was able to write to John Paston that Sir William's process in the King's Bench was reversed.[70]

This alleviation of Oldhall's troubles was doubtless the circumstance which prompted John Paston's efforts to get him to marry his sister, Elizabeth Paston. Sir William's wife, Margaret Willoughby, who was still alive in the autumn of 1450 (when he and she had together received a papal plenary remission of all sins when at point of death), had probably died when he was in sanctuary, for she was buried in the church of the Greyfriars in London.[71] Mistress Paston was willing for the match, but nothing came of the proposal, and the lady subsequently married Sir Robert Poynings, Jack Cade's erstwhile sword-bearer, who, at the same time as Oldhall's outlawry was annulled, was also acquitted and delivered (so William Worcester wrote) of all treasons.

A letter from Agnes Paston to her son John, then at the Inner Temple, mentioning his proposal to marry off his sister to Oldhall, shows that the Pastons were in some doubt whether as yet *his lond standyt cler*,[72] in other words, whether Oldhall had recovered his forfeited lands. In fact he had not. But he now took advantage of the Yorkist ascendancy to present to the Commons in the July 1455 parliament a petition demanding restitution. In it he pointed out that he had been a faithful liegeman to each of the Lancastrian kings, and had *dispended his yong daies in the service of theym and of othir Princes of theire blode* in France, Normandy, Guienne, and elsewhere. He had intended, he stated, to live out his days supported by his inheritance and the property acquired by *his long contynuel labour*, but, after being indicted by an intimidated jury and subsequently outlawed, on the ground that he had given *fals untrewe Counsaill* to Jack Cade and other rebels, in the parliament of 1453 he had been

[70] *Paston Letters*, iii, p. 33, 41; *EHR, loc. cit.*; PRO, K.B. 27/777, Rex roll, mem. 3.
[71] *Papal Letters*, IX, 71.
[72] *Paston Letters*, ii, p. 301; *Archaeologia*, XXXVII, *loc. cit.*

declared a traitor by *malicious labour* and attainted. His outlawry had now been reversed, following his acquittal in the King's Bench on the oath of another jury, and he therefore requested that the Act of 1453 should be annulled by authority of parliament, that he should be restored to *name, fame, and worship* and to possession of his estates and other property, and that his own and his heirs' title to his lands should be affirmed. His bill was adopted by the Commons, passed by the Lords, and granted by the King.[73] On 23 October 1455 his forfeited estates were farmed out by the Exchequer to Richard Jenny and Thomas Petwyn (one of his own servants and later his executor) for two years as from Easter 1455; and on 21 November 1455, during the second session of the parliament, only four days after the Duke of York had again become Protector (following the King's relapse into madness), Oldhall requested and secured a royal patent exemplifying the recent parliamentary reversal of the attainder of 1453. All seems now to have been well, or at least for the time being: in February and March 1456 his three London tenements in Mugwell Street in Cripplegate Ward and his Hertfordshire manor of Eastwick were quitclaimed to him; by 22 October 1456 his Cambridgeshire manors were once more in his possession; and, clearly by the time when he made his will in November 1460, so were his other Hertfordshire lands and his Norfolk estates as well.[74]

Early in 1456 Henry VI recovered his health somewhat, and York's Protectorate came to an end on 25 February. However, the Duke remained chief counsellor for a time, and presumably one manifestation of his continued influence was Oldhall's first appointment, on 7 May 1456, to the office of justice of the peace in Norfolk, a position which he retained through the vicissitudes of the next four years. It is very improbable that Oldhall had resumed his old office of Chamberlain to the Duke of York. He evidently retained close contacts with his master and with old friends in the ducal household—in May 1458, for example, Sir Edmund Mulsho, an old colleague and a member of York's council, made him one of the executors of his will.[75] But in this time of more or less acute tension and hollow peace between the Yorkist and Lancastrian parties, there are some slight indications that Oldhall recognized his need to trim sail to catch other political breezes: it was almost certainly late in August 1458 that a correspondent of John Paston's told him that Archbishop Thomas Bourchier and his brother Henry, Viscount Bourchier, were to go down to Oldhall's place at Hunsdon *and hunte and sporte theym* there as his guests.[76] Lord Bourchier was married to the Duke of York's sister, but the Bouchiers were inclined to adopt a middle position between the Yorkists and the Court party. When, however, in the summer of 1459 the two main

[73] *Rot. Parl.*, V, 451; Ancient Petitions, PRO, S.C. 8, file 29, no. 1409.
[74] *CFR, 1454–61*, 138; *CPR, 1452–61*, 282; *CCR, 1454–61*, 115, 390; *Cat. of Anc. Deeds*, I, B/1244.
[75] *CPR, 1452–61*, 672; J. C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, Biographies*, p. 618.
[76] *Paston Letters*, iii, 133.

parties were preparing to resort to arms, there was no doubt where Oldhall's sympathies lay.

York's brother-in-law and supporter, Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, on 23 September 1459 met and defeated a Lancastrian force at Blore Heath (Staffs) when on his way to join York at Ludlow. But, faced with a powerful royalist army, the Yorkists gave way at nearby Ludford on 12 October and dispersed, their leaders fleeing overseas. A packed parliament subsequently met at Coventry on 20 November to register the Lancastrian victory, attaint York and his foremost supporters, and confirm the title to the throne of the six years old Prince of Wales. Sir William Oldhall was among those twenty-three lords and commoners singled out to be proscribed for treason, he himself being particularly charged with having, on 4 July previous at London in the parish of St. James at Garlickhithe, imagined and encompassed Henry VI's death and stirred the leaders of the Yorkist party to the treasons of Blore and Ludford.[77] Forfeiture of Oldhall's estates and other property followed automatically: on 5 January 1460 all his lands, goods and chattels were given to Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, and on 13 February and again on 20 March royal commissions were set up in the Home Counties and East Anglia to find out what these were and to seize them; and on 12 March a similar commission of inquiry and sequestration was instituted regarding Oldhall's property in London. On 16 March Buckingham's grant was confirmed, the lands and goods (including debts) being now made over to him and his heirs. On the same day, however, another writ gave control of all the chief forfeitures for the next three years to a group of specially appointed royal receivers, Oldhall's lands included, and his estates were certainly in *their* hands by 20 May.[78] Meanwhile, he was naturally dropped from the Norfolk commission of the peace when fresh patents of appointment were issued in March 1460.

Oldhall's new misfortune directly profited at least two men who had been objects of his displeasure. One was a Richard Wenlock who was now pardoned by the Crown 31 marks, which sum he had been condemned to pay the Earl of Warwick by the *malicious labour* of Sir William Oldhall, and on account of which he had been in Newgate gaol for two years.[79] The second was none other than Oldhall's own son-in-law, Walter, the son of Sir Theobald Gorges of Wroxhall (Somerset) and husband of Sir William's daughter and heir, Mary. There had evidently been a serious quarrel between father and son-in-law which had resulted in legal process, a dispute arising (according to Walter's petition) out of Sir William's failure to honour the marriage settlement. A promised entailed estate, in an annual rent of 40 marks, had been withheld. Subsequently, it was alleged, Oldhall and his servants had been only prevented by his daughter from murdering her husband at Little Fransham (Norfolk).

[77] *Rot. Parl.*, V, 349.
[78] *CPR, 1452–61*, 535, 562, 606; 605; 571, 572; *CCR, 1454–61*, 409.
[79] *CPR, 1452–61*, 581.

This attack by Oldhall had been followed by the extortion from his son-in-law of an oath to submit all matters between them to his judgement, and later by an action in the Court of King's Bench, which resulted in Walter Gorges being condemned in 500 marks; and then, afterwards, when Walter was still being kept in the prison of the King's Bench by Oldhall's influence, as it was alleged, the latter sued a feigned action against him on a charge of detinue of evidences and so had him condemned in a further sum of 300 marks. On 9 February 1460, when these damages stood to be regarded by the Crown as part of Oldhall's forfeited personalty, Walter Gorges received a royal pardon.[80]

What had been Oldhall's whereabouts since the Rout of Ludford in October 1459, there is no knowing. Clearly he was at large, and he may well have accompanied the Duke of York in his flight to Ireland and not come back to England until early in September 1460, when York himself returned (after the Yorkist victory at the battle of Northampton). Oldhall was certainly in London on 12 October 1460,[81] two days after the Duke's arrival at Westminster and four days before the Duke (in parliament) claimed the throne by hereditary title. This Yorkist parliament, summoned in Henry VI's name, after settling the reversion of the Crown on York and his heirs, automatically reversed the attainders of the Coventry parliament of the previous year. And so, legally, Oldhall's estates were once more his own. But time can hardly have been afforded him to regain possession.

By this time Oldhall must have been about seventy years of age, and the excitements of the previous ten years, especially of the last year, can only have told heavily on his constitution—his conduct towards the husband of his only child suggests a growing lack of judgement in family affairs and a failure of self-control, perhaps to be put down to feelings of frustration or hardening arteries. However this may be, although he survived to hear of his master, York, being proclaimed heir-apparent on 8 November 1460, he did not live to hear of the Duke's death at the battle of Wakefield just over seven weeks later. For, in spite of the fact that on 24 November 1460 his name was once more included in the list of those appointed to the Norfolk commission of the peace,[82] it is clear from other evidence that he was already dead by that date. He died, in fact, sometime between 17 November (when he had added a codicil to a will made two days before) and 20 November, when a writ was issued from Chancery instructing the royal escheator for Norfolk and Suffolk to make inquisitions post mortem regarding his estates. (A similar inquiry in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire was authorized on 26 November.[83])

It may safely be assumed that Sir William Oldhall died in London, for his will was made on 15 November 1460 in the city. By it he provided for his

[80] *ibid.*, 541.
[81] *Paston Letters*, iii, 234.
[82] *CPR, 1452–61*, 672.
[83] *CFR, 1454–61*, 282.

body to be buried, under a flat tomb of grey marble, in the chapel of St. John the Evangelist in the parish church of St. Michael called Whittington College, according to the discretion of the Master and his own executors. Here was to be established a chantry of two chaplains at a charge of 10 marks a year to be divided between them, and to the church Oldhall also left stuffs for vestments and all his military pennons and banners. The monetary bequests of the testament are set forth in considerable detail. They included small bequests for forgotten tithes to the churches of Little Fransham (£1), St. James in Garlickhithe in the City (£1), and Hunsdon (1 mark), and further sums to these churches, and to the church of Ditton Valence (Cambs), for masses for his soul. The Carmelites in Fleet Street, in whose church Sir William's father had been buried, were to receive £5 for masses and a gold herse-cloth, and every Franciscan, Dominican, and Austin friar in London was to have 2 marks. Every chaplain present at his interment was to have a shilling, every clerk, 6d., and every boy knowing how to read and sing, 4d. 15 marks were to go to lazars and other poor men. The Premonstratensian house at Wendling (Norfolk) and Bermondsey Priory (Surrey) were to receive other vestments. Members of Oldhall's personal household did pretty well out of the will: his chaplain and ten servants were named as beneficiaries, altogether receiving over £100 in money. Mention is made in the will of the testator's sister, Margaret Lexham, his niece, Agnes Cheyne, and William Lexham, his kinsman (perhaps nephew): the two ladies each received plate worth 20 marks, his kinsman Lexham 100 marks.

A somewhat surprising omission from the list of Oldhall's beneficiaries is that of the Duke of York himself, but the Duke's two elder sons, Edward, Earl of March, and Edmund, Earl of Rutland, received bequests: the former, Oldhall's grey walking-horse, and the younger brother, the horse's value in money. Archbishop Bourchier of Canterbury, whom Oldhall appointed as one of his executors, was left a great bowl of silver which was to be called the *bolle of Caunterbury*, and to another of his executors, Thomas Young, the Yorkist lawyer of Bristol, the same who had moved in parliament in 1451 for the recognition of the Duke of York as the King's heir and who was now (in 1460) sitting in parliament for Gloucestershire, Oldhall left the very large sum of £200, which was to be raised from moneys due to him from Richard Lord Willoughby and from the father of his son-in-law, Sir Theobald Gorges.

The will also contained instructions, regarding certain of Oldhall's manorial and other estates, to his feoffees: the priory of Pentney was to get Oldhall's manor of "Belhoushall" in North Tuddenham for the support of a perpetual chaplain in the priory church; an estate in the manors of Great and Little Fransham was to be created for his kinsman, William Lexham; the rents from the manor called "Oldhall's" in East Dereham and from Ditton Valence were to go to his executors until all his debts were paid, and then to his daughter Mary; his lands in fee simple in East Dereham and all his other estates in

England not mentioned specifically were to be sold by his executors, the money being used to content his legatees; and the rest of his wealth was to be distributed for the good of souls. An estate in the manor of Scarning, called "Drayton Hall," was to be created for Denise, wife of Edmund Buckenham, Esquire, so a codicil of 17 November provided. In addition to Archbishop Bourchier and Thomas Young, Oldhall's executors included Justice William Yelverton (of the King's Bench), John Heydon, William Lexham, his kinsman, and his servant, Thomas Peytewyn. Young, Heydon, and Justice Yelverton in 1457 had been among his feoffees in his Cambridgeshire estates and probably elsewhere as well.[84]

Not all of Oldhall's dispositions were observed: "Belhoushall" and Great and Little Fransham passed to his daughter Mary, and her husband died seised in 1466. The future of Hunsdon and Eastwick (Herts) was not specifically provided for in the will (except that a tenement in the former manor was to be given to one of Oldhall's servants by his feoffees there). But Hunsdon soon passed into royal hands, being bought for 2,000 marks by Edward IV from Archbishop Bourchier (doubtless acting as Oldhall's executor) sometime before July 1471. (In Henry VIII's reign, it was one of the houses where the royal children lived.) It is probable that Eastwick was also sold. Certainly, this estate was not mentioned in a petition presented to parliament in 1489 in which Oldhall's grandson, Sir Edmund Gorges, requested the annulment of the royal grant of his grandfather's forfeited estates (made originally in 1453 and confirmed in 1488) to Jasper Tudor, uncle to Henry VII and now Duke of Bedford, and his own restitution. It was only Great and Little Fransham, "Oldhall's manor" in East Dereham, Brookhall in Dersingham (Norfolk), and Ditton Valence (Cambs) that Jasper Tudor now relinquished. But then he may never have secured more than these to relinquish. Competition for forfeited lands had been keen in the 1450's.[85]

In looking over Oldhall's career, it would appear that he was unfortunate in the date of his birth: he was too young to profit as much as he might have done from Henry V's wars. Never did he receive any royal annuity for his long service overseas. And, though he served under John, Duke of Bedford, and Richard, Duke of York, when competitors for promotion were fewer, the greater part of that time was one in which the English were on the defensive in France, even in Normandy itself, so that the profits of war were no longer what they had once been. He was for long periods overseas, and so never was in a position to reap the advantages of appointment to local office: not until the last four years of his life was he even a J.P. in his native county, and he never held the positions of sheriff and escheator as his father had done. Moreover, he died just before the Yorkist party, to which for twenty years he had been closely attached, triumphed with the accession of Edward IV.

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[84] Somerset House, Register Stokton, fo. 21; *Cat. Ancient Deeds*, i, B/1244.
[85] *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 435a; *EHR*, XXV, p. 721; *CCR, 1468–76*, 191.